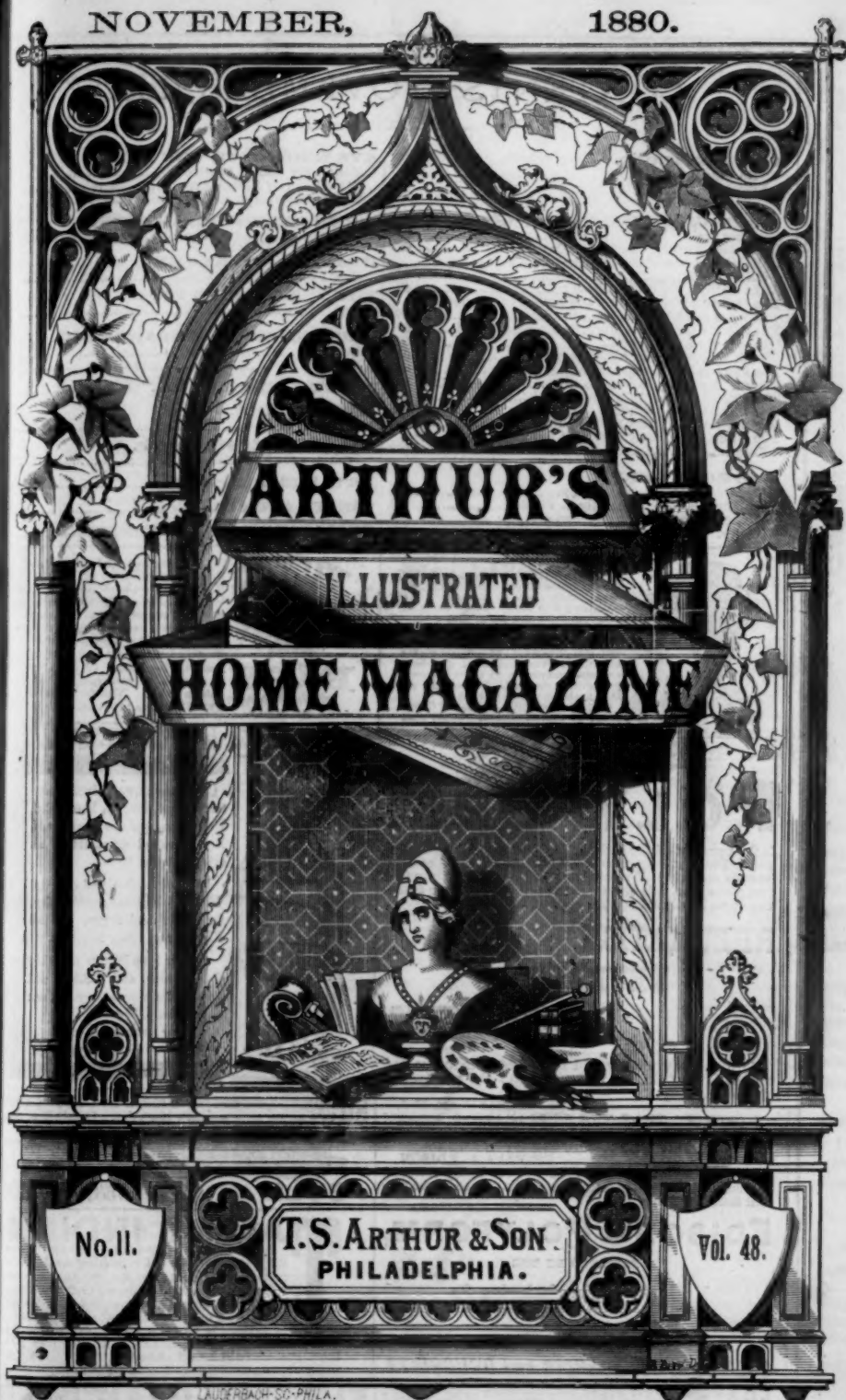


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1880.



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ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE

XLVIII.

NOVEMBER, 1880.

No. 44.



THE LAPPET-MOTH.

PROTECTIVE COLORS OF ANIMALS.

WHAT abundant food for thought is contained in the above phrase. Immediately the mind grasps the idea that color was bestowed upon animals by the All-wise Creator, not merely, as it were, by fancy or caprice, but in benevolence, giving them a better chance of lengthening their little lives. Frogs of this sort are so numerous as to seem well-nigh overwhelming.

Perhaps the most striking illustrations of this may be found in the insect world. Here grays, and browns, and olives harmonize with lichens, and wood, and stone, affording the creatures so colored a good means of concealment.

VOL. XLVIII.—43.

And yet some insects are exceedingly conspicuous, as witness the brilliant tints of many species of butterflies. But this, so far from disproving the theory, tends, as we shall see, to confirm it.

As may be seen from our illustrations, the Buff-tip moth so contracts its wings as to look exactly like a large piece of broken stick, the yellow patch at the extremity of the wings giving the appearance of the freshly-broken end. The Lappet-moth, when at rest, so disposes its rich brown wings as to seem, both in shape and color, like a dead leaf. In the case of other moths, we have those which settle among lichens and in the trunks of trees, being almost entirely concealed by the colors by which they are surrounded. Some, which strongly resemble bits of mortar, make stone walls their

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"NO YOU DON'T."—Page 682.

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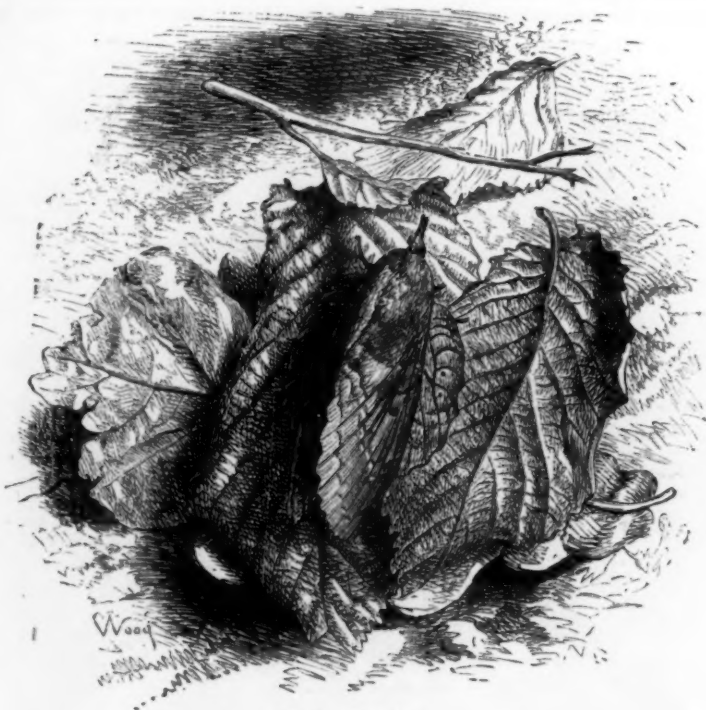
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ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE.

VOL. XLVIII.

NOVEMBER, 1880.

No. 11.



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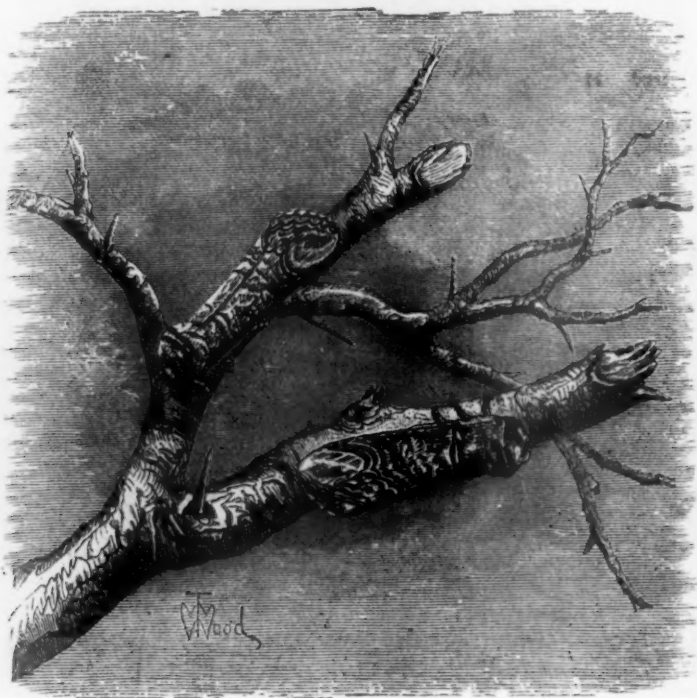
As may be seen from our illustrations, the Buff-tip moth so contracts its wings as to look exactly like a large piece of broken stick, the yellow patch at the extremity of the wings giving the appearance of the freshly-broken end. The Lappet-moth, when at rest, so disposes its rich brown wings as to seem, both in shape and color, like a dead leaf. In the case of other moths, we have those which settle among lichens and in the trunks of trees, being almost entirely concealed by the colors by which they are surrounded. Some, which strongly resemble bits of mortar, make stone walls their

(621)

favorite resting-places. It has been noticed, also, that moths which are on the wing in autumn and winter, partake of the prevailing hues of these seasons—autumnal moths are generally yellow and brown, like much of the foliage then visible, and many winter moths are of gray and silvery tints.

Gorgeous colors, however, as we have said, are no evidence of non-protection. These best harmonize with the bright and vivid hues of the leaves, the flowers and the sky. A familiar example of the hiding power in a conspicuous insect may be found in the orange-tip butterfly, which,

great difficulty. It is when at rest that it requires protection, and this it obtains by its color and markings on the under surface, and by its peculiar habits. The upper wings have an acute lengthened apex, which is exactly the shape of the tip of the leaf of many tropical trees and shrubs; while the hind wings are produced into a short, narrow tail, which well represents the stalk of a leaf. Between these points runs a dark curved line, representing the mid-rib, and from this radiate a few oblique markings for the veins of the leaf. The color of the under side of the wings closely imitates that of dead leaves, but it varies almost infinitely



THE BUFF-TIP MOTH.

though easily seen on the wing, is perfectly concealed when resting in the evening in its favorite position among the umbels of the wood-parsley. Its under surface is beautifully mottled with green and white, which strikingly assimilate with the green and white flower-heads of this plant. Much more wonderful, however, and perhaps the most wonderful of all imitative insects, is the leaf-butterfly of India. This is a rather large and handsome butterfly, of a deep bluish color, with a broad orange band across the wings. It is thus sufficiently conspicuous; but it flies very quickly, and in a zigzag manner, so as to be caught with

through shades of bright yellow, reddish, ochre, brown and ashy, just as leaves vary in their different stages of drying and decay. Even more remarkable is the manner in which the diseases and decay of leaves are represented by powdered dots and blotches, often gathered into little groups, so as to imitate in a most marvelous way the various fungi which attack dying leaves. But to render the disguise effective, it is necessary that the insect should assume the position of a leaf, and this it does most perfectly. It always settles on an upright twig or branch, holding on by its fore-legs, while its body, concealed between the lower

margin of the wings, rests against the stem which the extremity of the tail, representing the stalk, just touches. The head and antennæ are concealed between the front margins of the wings, and thus nothing is seen at a little distance but what appears to be a dead leaf still attached to the branch. Yet further, the creature seems to have an instinct which leads it to prefer to rest among dead or decaying leaves, which are often very persistent on bushes in the tropical forests; and this combination of form, color, marking, habit and instinct produces a degree of concealment which is perfectly startling. You see this gay

ences of this kind, and knowing exactly what to look for, you are able sometimes to detect it in repose, and are then more than ever amazed at the completeness of the deception, and at the same time profoundly impressed with the protection that must be afforded by this wonderful disguise—a protection whose effect is seen in the wide range and extreme abundance of the species.

The tropics abound with other examples of insects equally well-protected. The best-known are the leaf-insects of the genus *Phyllium*, whose wings and wing-covers are broad and flat, shaped and veined exactly like leaves, while their legs



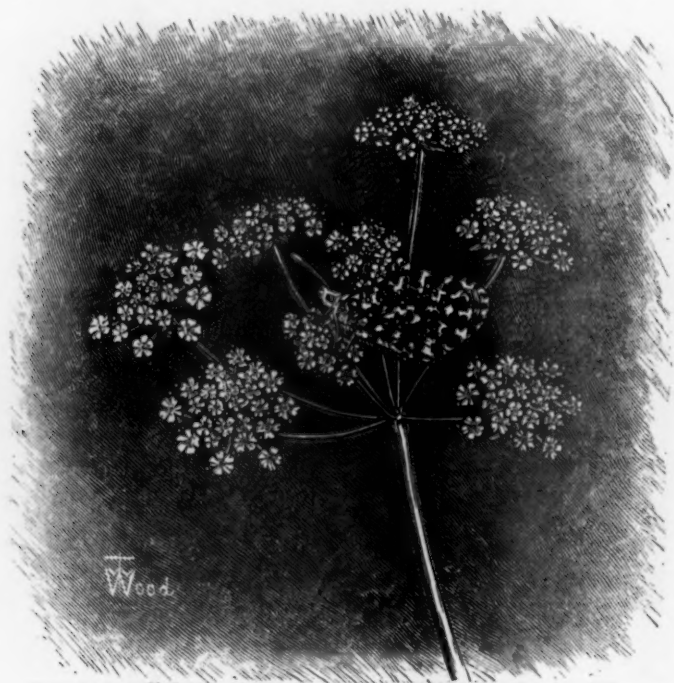
LEAF-BUTTERFLY OF INDIA.

butterfly careering along a forest path, and suddenly rest on a shrub not three yards from you. Approaching carefully, you look for it in vain, and may often have to touch the branches before it will dart out from under your very eyes. Again you follow it, and mark the branch on which it has seemed to rest, but in vain you creep forward and scan every twig and leaf. You see nothing but foliage—some green, some brown and decaying—till the insect again starts forth, and you find that you have been actually gazing upon it without being able to see any difference between it and the surrounding leaves. After repeated experi-

head and thorax have all flat dilatations, like the stipules of many plants; and the whole being of the exact green tint of the foliage of the plant they live on, it is actually impossible to detect them when they are not in motion. The walking-stick insects, or spectres, are equally curious. These are long, cylindrical insects, often nearly a foot in length, and of the exact color of pieces of greenish or brown sticks. If they have wings, these fold up closely, and are concealed under wing-covers of the same stick-like appearance; while the head and legs are so shaped and jointed as either to fit closely on to the stick-like body, or to appear like

branched twigs. These creatures hang about shrubs in the forests, and can seldom be distinguished from small twigs and branches which have fallen from the trees overhead. They remain quite motionless during the day, and feed at night, and they hang across the foliage, holding on by two or three of their legs only, while the others are closely fitted to the body, and they thus give themselves that unsymmetrical appearance which belongs to accidentally-broken twigs. A few of the species are still further protected by curious green, leafy excrescences all over the body, so as to look exactly like a piece of dead twig overgrown with a delicate moss. Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace,

out rigidly like sticks, which they resemble in shape as well as in color. Every one knows, however, that there are a number of very brightly-colored caterpillars, and it may be asked how these are protected, or why the others need protection if these can do without it. Bright-colored caterpillars, such as the *Jacobaea*, and the hairy and spiny ones feed freely by day, fearless of observation, while the green and brown hide, seeking their food at night. Repeated observations have shown that birds and even frogs, lizards and spiders greedily eat the less showy ones, universally rejecting the gaudy—so the conclusion may be drawn that, in the latter case, the little creatures



THE ORANGE-TIP BUTTERFLY.

F. L. S., to whom we owe much of our knowledge on this subject, says that such a one was brought to him in Borneo by a Dyak, who assured him that moss had grown over the insect while alive, and it was only by very close examination that it could be discovered that the supposed moss was really part of the integument of the insect.

Among caterpillars protective coloring is the most general and conspicuous. An immense number of these creatures are green, corresponding with the tints of the leaves on which they feed, or brown when they rest on bark and twigs; while a large number of the larvæ of the Geometridæ or Loopers have the habit of holding themselves

need no protection, being unfit for the food of other animals. In the same way, the beautiful "calico-bug" or "lady-bird," differs from other beetles, in having no means of defense and seeking none, presumably for a similar reason. The rainbow-tints of many moths and butterflies may properly be imputed to a like cause. But there are other modes of protection, besides a nauseous taste, which renders concealment unnecessary. Many insects are armed with stings, or shells, or spines, so as to be practically uneatable—we all know how gay are the colors of wasps, and bees, and hornets. Sometimes, as we have intimated, brilliant hues themselves form the best protection.

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An excellent example of this is afforded by the caterpillar of the Emperor moth. The green body, adorned with pink spots is pre-eminently beautiful, and in most situations, conspicuous; but it feeds on heather, and its colors then so completely harmonize with the young, green shoots and small, pink flowers, that it is with difficulty detected.

So far we have confined our attention to insects, but we may find the protective influence of color apparent throughout the whole range of animated nature. Nocturnal animals, such as mice, rats, bats and moles, are all of dusky or blackish hues, and are therefore very difficult to be seen at night, when alone they move about; while during the

green, exactly corresponding with the vegetation among which they dwell. The curious geckos—flat lizards, with dilated toes, which cling to the trunks of trees or to rocks—are often finely marbled with green and gray, so as exactly to resemble the lichen-covered surface to which they cling. Many fishes, also, present examples of protective coloring. Such as rest on the bottom, like the flounder, skate, sole or Miller's Thumb, are invariably of the color of the bottom, and often singularly speckled, so as to resemble sand or gravel. Such as swim near the surface of the water are almost always dark-bluish or greenish above, and white beneath, colors which evidently



JACOBÆE CATERPILARS.

day they conceal themselves in holes or underground. When concealment by day as well as by night is required, as in the case of owls and goat-suckers, we find dusky, mottled tints, assimilating with bark or earth during the day, and not very showy at night. Some nocturnal animals, however, as in the case of the polecat, are quite conspicuous. But here, its universally-dreaded odor is a most effective protection.

Among reptiles protective tints are very apparent. Lizards and snakes, in temperate climates, are all more or less brown or olive-tinged—this is the case, also, with nocturnal snakes of all latitudes. In the tropics alone, reptiles are often of a vivid

tend to their concealment from enemies in the air above them or in the water below. The gayly-tinted fishes from warm seas are many of them well concealed when surrounded by the brilliant sea-weeds, corals, sea-anemones and other marine animals, which make the sea-bottom sometimes resemble a fantastic flower-garden. The pipe-fish and sea-horses are excellent examples of this style of coloring. Some of them are greenish, resembling floating sea-weed; but in Australia there is a large species which is covered with curious leafy appendages, and all of a brilliant red shade, and this lives among red sea-weed, and is then perfectly concealed.

Passing upward in the animal scale, let us glance for a moment at birds. In northern latitudes, the region of deciduous trees, anything approaching a pure green in the plumage of a bird is unknown, while brown or olive is the almost universal body-color. These tints are least conspicuous among the leafless trees and bushes, which prevail for so large a part of the year, and when the need of protection is greatest. Contrast with these, the brilliant colors of the birds of tropical countries. Here, in the evergreen forests, and nowhere else, do we meet with those whose ground-color is green. Parrots, which are confined to such regions, are generally green, with small patches of vivid tints. In the Eastern tropical islands, many pigeons are as green as parrots, and there are numbers of other groups which are of the same hue. These all frequent thick foliage, with which their colors so exactly harmonize that it is most difficult to detect them.

Larger animals also give striking examples of the theory of protection by colors, their tints corresponding to their habits, needs and the countries in which they live. Canon Tristram, who has traveled much in the Sahara, thus describes the characteristics of its animal life: "In the desert, where neither trees, brushwood, nor even undulations of the surface, afford the slightest protection against its foes, a modification of color which shall assimilate an animal to that of the surrounding country is absolutely necessary. Hence, without exception, the upper plumage of every bird, whether lark, chat, sylvian or sand-grouse, and also the fur of all the smaller mammals, and the skin of all the snakes and lizards, is of one uniform isabelline or sand color." This is not a characteristic of one desert, but of all. In a recent account of the Steppe of Erivan, in Asia Minor, it is said that "a remarkable feature of the animal inhabitants of the Steppe, insects and lizards, is the most perfect coincidence of their coloring with the coloring of the Steppe." More prominent examples of this prevalent hue are such animals as the camel and the lion, which are exactly of the usual tints of sand and sandy rock.

In the arctic regions, these reddish-yellows are entirely wanting, and instead of them appears pure white, or in a few cases dark brown or black, where conspicuousness seems of more importance than concealment. All the bears of the globe are brown or black, except the polar bear, which is white. The polar hare, the snow-bunting, the snowy-owl and the jer-falcon, are also white or nearly so; while the arctic fox, the ermine and the Alpine hare, change white in winter, as does the Highland ptarmigan. This bird is a fine example of protective coloring, for its summer plumage so exactly harmonizes with the lichen-covered stones among which it delights to sit, that

a person may walk through a flock without seeing a single bird; and when it changes to white in winter it is equally protected amid the snow which covers the mountains. A striking exception to the usual white covering of arctic animals is the musk-ox. This is of a dark-brown color, easily seen among the snow and ice, but the reason of this is not difficult to explain. The musk-ox is gregarious, and derives its protection from this habit. A solitary strayed animal would soon become the prey of polar bears or even of the arctic foxes; it is therefore of more importance that it should see its comrades at a distance, and so be able to rejoin them, than that it should be concealed from its few enemies. Another case, is that of the sable, which retains its rich brown fur throughout the severity of a Siberian winter, but at that season it frequents trees, feeding on fruits and berries, and is so active that it catches birds among the branches. Again, the common raven is found in the extreme arctic regions, but is always black; and this is probably because it has no enemies, while, as it feeds on carrion, it does not need to be concealed from its prey.

Wonderful indeed are the works of the Maker of all!

H.

SLUMBER SONG.

GOOD-NIGHT! Good-night!
O laughing heart, to rest depart!
Leave dance and song, leave game and jest;
Repose is best—is best—is best—
Good-night!

Good-night! Good-night!
O grieving heart, to rest depart!
Cease empty strife, cease weary quest;
Repose is best—is best—is best—
Good-night!

Good-night! Good-night!
Nor laugh, nor weep, nor fear to sleep!
Through all the night One wakes above,
And shields us with His love—His love—
Good-night! HELEN HERRERT.

GEORGE ELIOT, in her "Felix Holt," makes Esther—a young girl just waking into thought—say to her father: "That must be the best life." "What life, my dear child?" "Why, that where one bears and does everything because of some great and strong feeling, so that this and that in one's circumstances don't signify." She uttered a deeper truth than she imagined. The best life, the most valuable and the most solidly happy, is one which is so full of something out of self—so intent on some noble enterprise, or rendered so enthusiastic by an ideal of what life should be—that the events which ripple its surface do not disturb its full and deep undercurrent.

LITTLE-GIRL GOSLING.
A LEAP-YEAR STORY.

"EXILDA, am I, or is Rayna Rodney crazy?" Alonzo Walmsley worried his blonde moustache with one hand while the fingers of the other twirled a dainty note. "Dod was in the office yesterday. You know Doddie, Rayna's regular 'small boy' brother. Seeing him then and there it occurred to me to give the little girl a ride behind my bonnie bays this afternoon. She doesn't have any too much pleasure of that sort, and I know how hugely she would enjoy that. I fancied the breeze bringing the color into her cheeks; her dreamy eyes kindling in the glow of sunshine, and her tongue running from 'grave to gay, from lively to severe,' as a girl's will under such circumstances. I'm not the least bit in love, Ilda. Since that affair of Anna Theresa's ended I've almost abandoned the idea of matrimony, but the scene I conjured up made my heart go 'pit-a-pat,' like Zekiel's. Knowing well any verbal message rolls right off of Doddie's base-ball of a brain, the upshot of the matter was I penned a little note requesting the pleasure, etc. Only this and nothing more. This morning brings her reply. She accepts the invitation and asks me to marry her."

Miss Exilda Walmsley, a stately maiden of thirty, some five years her brother's senior, thought there must be some mistake. In order to convince her, Alonzo rather reluctantly placed the scented missive in her shapely hands. It ran thus:

"Miss Rodney accepts the innvetation with thanks. How kind of you to think of it. Please call at three. I hope the day will prove favorabel. Would you mind marrien?"

The name and date followed, and this was all. Daintiest chirography failed to conceal the writer's neglect of such educational advantages as had been afforded her, still there was a charm in the simple school-girl phraseology which caused Lonz Walmsley's sister to ponder seriously and even then refuse to accept her brother's interpretation of that curious sentence: "Would you mind marrien?"

"I was well-acquainted with Amanda Rodney before she married and went South," said Exilda, knitting her blonde eyebrows over that innocent document. "I don't know much about these younger daughters. If I remember rightly Rayna's only seventeen, but it seems to me she isn't the sort of girl to take advantage of leap year and propose. Especially in this abrupt way."

"There it is though," remarked Alonzo.

Sure enough, there it was. There was no vaulting over, creeping under, getting around or staring it out of countenance. It pointed to the

felicity or infelicity of wedlock as plain as letters on a sign post. "Would you mind marrien?" However, Miss Walmsley, loyal to her convictions and her sex, declined to accept the evidence.

"Did this reach you by mail?" she inquired.

"No. Dod brought it."

"Then it is barely possible, is it not, that some one is enjoying a joke at your expense and hers? Have you anything in her handwriting?"

"Nothing but a little poem she copied under my supervision."

"If you've no objection suppose we compare that with this."

Having acted upon this suggestion, sister and brother mutually agreed that there was no doubt about Rayna's having penned the note. After some further conversation, during which Exilda firmly maintained her first position, while Alonzo as firmly adhered to his, he announced it as his intention to "Take Raynie out and leave the rest to her."

After which conclusion Exilda withdrew, leaving our perplexed friend to his reflections.

During Exilda's and Amanda's intimacy, Lonz Walmsley called occasionally at Rodney's. For the sake of escorting his sister home, however, not for his own pleasure, although it was always said to be a delightful place to visit. Young gentleman like he held himself aloof from the, then, juvenile members of the family. Six years after Amanda's marriage, and some eight or ten months previous to the opening of my story, he discovered the youngest daughter's budding charms, and renewed the acquaintance just in time to prevent its dying out entirely.

There was enough for comfort and hospitality under the Rodney roof, and something to spare doubtless. In addition to this sound sense and good breeding characterized the young ladies deportment, still, the world of pleasure and fashion—Lonz Walmsley's world—was not aware of their existence. They dressed tastefully, entertained delightfully, received informally, and our society-wearied hero soon contracted the habit of spending so much time there, Mr. Rodney begun to ask: "Which of my girls does he want?"

"It must be Juliet," hazarded Mrs. Rodney. "Fair men almost invariably prefer brunettes."

"I think it's Isabel," put in Augustus. "I heard them quoting poetry the other night."

Until the arrival of that tiny note no one, even Raynie herself, dreamed of its being Little-girl Gosling—her father's pet name for his favorite child.

"Get Juliet to write an answer, and you copy it," suggested Isabel. "You know you never can be trusted to write or speak correctly."

Little-girl Gosling refused to listen to this well-meant advice, and, after penning half a dozen notes in as many different styles, dashed off the

one into which we peeped, then trilled a song of triumph.

Alonzo, tall, graceful, blue-eyed, blonde-bearded, had always been her hero. When his name was mentioned in connection with Isabel's, that "ladye faire" invariably tossed her nineteen-year-old head and declared him to be "too ancient" for her. Juliet, who had allowed Augustus to put in an appearance between herself and her sisters, was, unknown to the family, on the eve of giving herself away to a wealthy Cuban.

It was left Raynie, then, our little "fancy free" maid, to become absorbed in the hitherto non-committal young gentleman, to welcome every visit with a beating heart, and dream over every trivial attention with flushing cheeks. What a drive theirs was when it came off, as it did.

The Rodneys not owning a carriage themselves, and Rayna being too young for special attentions from the sterner sex, had not, as Lonz said, any too much of that sort of pleasure.

Yes, it was an enchanting drive through an enchanted country. The hills stood out against the sky like cameos, the orchards were dappled with apples rosy or russet, pears dropped from their boughs like golden tears, peaches blushed behind leafy veils, plums purpled the branches, quinces revealed their neighborhood, and the full corn in the ear dipped its green banners. Under reaches of woodland there brooded "a silence more eloquent than song." Bronze, gold and scarlet touches—hints of the gorgeousness to be—were on the branches, while through the many-pillared aisles floated subtle suggestions of pine boughs, bruised herbs and "the moist, rich smell of rotting leaves."

Lonz Walmsley was not disappointed in his companion. She proved to be all he anticipated, and more. What a sweet face it was, too, that brightened or saddened, looked saucy or demure, as the theme inspired or the mood moved her.

All the way our hero studied her closely, and the more he did so the more strongly he became convinced that in spite of a former love affair's disastrous ending, he wouldn't a bit "mind marrying" had not this pretty young creature "flung herself at his head." He was not quite certain he liked "that style of girl," or one who "could do that sort of thing," under any circumstances, however modest and charming her general deportment. Consequently his original intention was carried out. He made no allusion to her singular proposal, nor did she.

"Any way," thought Alonzo, "she's but a child, a lovable, inexperienced child. It isn't right to expect her to come up to a woman's measure. How nice it would be to guard, pet, instruct her; to have her with me always. Maybe she thinks it's all settled, and will expect me to ask her to name the day. However, I'll wait and see."

The short day waned as they sped homeward, and through the clear ambers of the west pushed the moon's shining bow, and trembled the "little white star." Silver and gold lights made Raynie Rodney's sweet face look almost saintly as she rested one instant in Alonzo's arms in her descent from the carriage at her father's door. Silver, gold and crimson streamed over her when the door opened, and Doddie pushed out with a small Scotch terrier in his arms.

"She's been frettin' after you awful," he said, tightening his grip on the now animated bundle. "She went under the sofa, and I couldn't get her out for anything till she heard you."

"You wouldn't say whether I might bring her along or not," said Raynie, catching up the shaggy thing, leaning her smooth cheek against the rough head and at the same time turning upon Alonzo a half-smiling, half-saucy face. "She's been grieving her little dog heart out after me. Now see what you've done."

"I beg pardon," replied Alonzo. "I've no recollection of your having asked any such permission. I assuredly should have had no objection."

"Ah, no, who could?" returned Raynie, still caressing the dog. "She's the most affectionate creature ever lived. A friend of mine owned her, and she took so to me he had to give her up. I've only had her three days."

Alonzo lingered, not because he was interested in the animal's history, but because the little girl looked so charming.

"I'm sorry to have parted you over three hours, then; but indeed I've no recollection of your asking me if she should go along. When did you do so?"

"When I answered your note," replied Raynie, a shyness creeping over her face and manner at the recollection of all this cost her, also certain ink-stains on the envelope. "I said—don't you remember—would you mind Marion?"

Even Little-girl Gosling noticed a remarkable change in Lonz Walmsley's countenance and manner. He began some remark, he reddened, laughed, choked, then suddenly put an end to this transformation scene by flinging himself into the carriage, lifting his hat, and driving pell-mell down the street.

They are to be married, of course, and that, too, before long. Exilda threatens to present the bride a first-class spelling-book. Little-girl Gosling's a bright young thing, however, and by and by, when she's as old, will know as much as the rest of us.

MADGE CARROL.

IF a man have love in his heart, he may talk in broken language, but it will be eloquence to those who listen.



O FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS.

O FAIREST of the rural maids!
 Thy birth was in the forest shades;
 Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
 Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,
 Were ever in the sylvan wild;
 And all the beauty of the place
 Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
 Is in the light shade of thy locks;
 Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
 Its playful way among the leaves.

Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene
 And silent waters heaven is seen;
 Their lashes are the herbs that look
 On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
 Are not more sinless than thy breast;
 The holy pence that fills the air
 Of those calm solitudes, is there.

WM. C. BRYANT.

AUNT BECKY.

ONE day last fall we sat writing busily in the afternoon, never looking out of the window, even though the autumn airs came in delightfully as they stirred the yellow leaves of the maples and made the crimson saffras quiver and glow like a thing of life. A gentle tapping on the sill, and a voice said: "We want to run around a little, while Aunt Becky is at our house, and I do wish you'd put away your other self and come with us. The day is fine and we thought we would visit the old grave-yard and some of the old places that Becky knew when she was a girl."

Now this Becky was an elderly maiden lady who was born and brought up in the neighborhood. Every inch of the ground is familiar; every object speaks to her; every old house, and barn, and tree, and knoll tell her a story. Dear old creature! We opened our desk and put away everything and were ready in five minutes.

As we walked down the lane she pointed to a wide-spreading elm over in the fallow field, saying, with a little sigh: "Yon's the tree that a passel of us girls took shelter under one time when we were going to a quilting at Nate Lowrie's; I didn't want to start so soon for I mistrusted there would be a shower; I'd seen Kite, our dog, eating grass the night before, and that's a sure sign of rain. We were all droppin' wet when we got to Nate's, and we put on whatever we could get hold of until our clothes dried. I'll never forget that time. One of the girls dressed all up in his clothes, and another put on old Granny Lowrie's old-fashioned linsey-woolsey gown and dress-handkerchief about her neck, and even the white cambric cap with the wide, flopping border; and another put on old man Flint's quarterly-meetin' clothes, even to the black bombazette stock, and such times as we did have chasing one another was powerful funny. You see Reub Flint was an old homeless critter, a good Methody he was, and he lived round among the brethren, hereabouts and thereabouts, making his home among all of them. Dear me, there's not more than three of the girls left who cut up so that day, and they all had a prospect for a longer life than I had, for I was powerfully afflicted with the as'ma when I was young."

As we walked along, Becky's little stream of talk flowed evenly as a rill. Everything was full of incident. We, my neighbor and myself, found pleasure in listening to her. As we passed the site of the old school-house, Becky stopped and said: "There stands the old walnut-tree yet, and there is the crab-apple, and the wild cherry, and the bluff bank above the spring, and there is the rock where Tom Wilders cut his forehead, but, ah me, the railroad has played the mischief with everything!"

An old house stood out in a field at the roadside. Becky said: "I never could go home without stopping to see old Auntie Glenn's dear old cottage," so we clambered over the high rail fence and held up our skirts out of the reach of the burdocks, and beggar-burs, and Spanish needles that crowded the fence corners, and picked out our steps among the weeds and stones until we stood inside the tumble-down log-cabin. Among the other reminiscences that came fresh to Becky's mind was that of a wedding, and the bride stood there beside the window, and the preacher here by the door with both hands leaning on the back of a chair, and he looked down and said over the words as fast as he could talk, and in his embarrassment he called the groom Phillipian instead of Philemon; and then when he sat down he placed himself so near the edge of the chair that he tipped up one leg in the air before he caught himself. And at night they had a dance, and when the bride took off her slippers all the girls stood in a huddle, and when she threw it it fell on Mary Barton's shoulder, and they knew that Mary would be married first, though no fellow was paying 'tentions to her. And it came about sure enough that Mary married the little, red-headed school-master who taught one term in Birch Hollow and boarded at her uncle's, and at that time Mary hadn't mor'n said, "how de do" to the gentleman. They had met at singing-schools, but he always sat among the bass singers and she at the other end of the school-house among the trebles.

And thus Becky ran on, every object giving her a text. Why it was quite like reading a story, quite like an old man's soliloquy as he sat out in the sunshine mumbling over the old-time incidents of all his past life. And we kept close beside Becky, and said: "Well I declare!" and, "Really!" and, "Did I ever!"

When she walked up the shaky stairs and her black hat caught films and cobwebs that covered it like a veil, we followed after. Her cotton-gloved hand clutched mine, as she whispered: "It was in that corner the mother died. I'll never, never forget that night! It was summer time, and a storm rose slowly in the west, and got blacker and blacker, and 'long about the turn of the night she fell asleep, though her eyes kept openin' every little bit, but we could see that she was easier. About the time the storm broke, death came. Oh, it was terrible! The winds blowed furiously, and the trees just lashed themselves, and the thunder roared, and the lightning blazed, while inside the house the family was givin' way to their sorrow. There was old man Glenn, and Jim, and Lucy, and the two little boys, and some of the neighbors was tryin' to comfort them and consolin' them with pious talk, but it did no good. Just as she was givin' up the ghost a peal of

thunder shook the house till it rocked, and that made her open her black eyes their very widest, and strange as it may seem we could not close them after she was gone. For my part I did not think queer of it, but old Mis. Storer shook her head and signified that it meant something."

Here Becky puckered her mouth and folded her hands, and walked to the window to look out I followed after and sat down on a nail-keg a-near, and said: "Had Mis. Storer any superstitious whims or notions about the woman's eyes keeping open after she was dead? Seems to me it was owing to a contraction of the muscles of the eyelids, nothing more."

"Well," said Becky, "it's not for the like of me to be telling tales of the dead and gone, specially them that never harmed me or mine, but old Mis. Storer had known Katy Glenn when she was Katy Sloan, and she said a prettier, fresher, sweeter girl no one in the valley ever looked upon. When Katy was about seventeen years old she worked at the tavern in the village nearest her home, and among the boarders there was a handsome young fellow who was reading medicine. It all came about somehow that he and Katy were engaged, and his people objected to the match, because she was a tavern-girl, and they laid plans to break the engagement. It was pitiful no doubt, and in the end he went away to Virginia, and the poor girl was left—a mother but not a wife. Her family did not want the child, and they persuaded her to give it away to the miller's wife who had just lost hers by scarlet-fever. She did so, the little, toddling mite not quite one year old, running everywhere as nimble as a ground sparrow, and the second day after it was taken to its new home, it ran into the mill-race and was drowned. Katy's grief was powerful, you could have heard her scream half a mile as she stood holding the dripping little corpse in her arms. Everybody pitied the girl, and were mad enough at all those who had wronged her to hang them on the nearest trees. Well, for six nights Katy never closed an eye in sleep; she just lay and moaned-like, and held her hands on her forehead and over her eyes to shut out the sight of her dead baby. All they could do they couldn't close the eyelids of that poor little corpse! If they pressed them down and laid pennies on them, they would slowly shove off, and the strange, staring eyes look right at a body as though they were begging a favor or pleading for pity. People thought it was the sorrowful eyes wide open that haunted Katy. You see she took all the blame on herself. She said if she had kept it, had stuck to the little thing through thick and thin, it would 'a' been better for her, and it might 'a' lived and led a useful life, and been a blessing to her and to the world. She fretted powerfully, and used to sit beside its grave and go on at a fearful rate. And

though she married Zekel Glenn and lived to raise a nice family, the old sorrow never left her, and when she died and her eyes refused to shut like, some of the old neighbors said it was a judgment on her for giving away the baby; that it was a sort of a reminder, though for my part I think it was neither one nor the other; that it just happened so. Might 'a' been because of the storm, and that she heard it and it gave her a sudden surprise or scare, just as the soul was parting from the body as you may say. No," said Becky, "I don't go much on these queer superstitious notions that some folks have."

And here while I looked up at the cobwebby-rafters to which stuck bits of twiggy birds'-nests, glued together so compactly, and took note of the dried herbs, and the yellow-jackets' gray old domiciles, and thought of that time when the storm at midnight rocked the poor little cabin while the awful mystery of death and its revelations reigned within these humble walls, Becky sighed and ran the wide hem of her calico apron in a stripping way through her fingers—just like a little embarrassed girl. She acted just as if she had something to say, and was feeling her way to see if it was proper to do so. I understood by intuitiveness, as it were. There was something of a confiding nature that the poor old girl wanted to say; I was not mistaken, we women can divine this in a minute's time, so, as old Tim Lynch used to say, "I used soothing means," to draw out the revelation. I said: "Well—well—we all see a great many changes in this life of ours; some see a good many trials while others appear to slide along easily with never a trouble at all, but in the end one is about as well off as another," and here I sighed, and picked carelessly at the splinters in the rough window sill.

This little speech had the desired effect. Becky leaned over with her elbows on her knees, and said: "Zekel Glenn used to have a cousin who made his home among his relatives about here, Ephraim, by name; he used to pay some 'entions to me when I was a girl, and I don't know but I might have had him only for mother. You see she was always so picky about little things. Ephraim was a fiddler, one of the best fiddlers I ever heard, and mother said no fiddler ever amounted to anything. Why, if he worked through the day time and could do a job of fiddling at night and make something extra, I should call that good management! I never had any trouble with mammy only about that one beau of mine. She fairly hated him. Why she got so she didn't speak to him or notice him at all, and one time when she stuck a fork over the door-latch to keep him out, it was more than he could stand, and he never came back again. Why, Ruzilla, I took to my bed on the head of it, and I didn't eat a mouthful for mo'n a fortnight! I didn't want

to see anybody, or talk to anybody, or nothing. I just laid and looked at the chinkin' in the wall, day after day. Folks thought it was my old complaint ailed me, but it was nothing only I was broken-hearted! Law me, it was as bad as sickness!" and here Becky shook her head mournfully.

"What became of him?" I asked, interested and amused.

"Married Mary Jane Billings and moved out to the Reserve. I did hear that some of his family had the milk sickness, but that's all I know of them. After mammy died, I went West with sister Joanna, but I never took a notion to any one else, with a view to matrimony. One old fellow, a widower with five children, talked round as though he'd a liking for me, but he never told me face to face. It's all the same if he had; Ephraim's image fills my heart. I don't want to marry nobody. Poor mammy, I forgive her; she meant it for the best, I suppose."

"Oh, well," I said, rising and shaking the wrinkles out of my second-best alpaca, "maybe it was for the better, and you may live to thank your stars that you did not marry in your girlhood. I think a single life is full of enjoyment; one has such a fine chance for doing good. You can go and come when you please, and there is no one to say, 'do this,' or 'do that,' or 'madam, you must obey me.'"

At this we both laughed, and gathering up our skirts, we crept down the dusty stairway, stooping, so as to avoid bumping our heads on the low timbers and joists. Yes, yes, the old house was full of stories; it was like an old, smoky book in a smoky binding, falling into tatters!

The neighbor who had gone into the old house with us was leaning over the bars conversing with an elderly woman in a buggy at the roadside. She said to the woman as she drove off: "Well, you and your old man come over, then, on Sunday, and bring Eph with you. Tell him I'll be as glad to see him as though he was one of my brothers."

"Well, I'll do so," said the woman in the buggy, and she jerked the lines and drove off so fast that the empty butter and lard crocks in the back of the buggy fairly danced and jingled.

"Now let us go to the graveyard next," said Becky, slipping her arm into mine.

"Did you ever?" said the neighbor, Mrs. Bennett. "How lucky for you old acquaintances! Why we'll have to get up a picnic, I guess. She's just telling me that Ephraim Taft came yesterday on a visit, and that his wife is dead, and his last daughter is married, and he's left alone without even a housekeeper. Oh, I'll be so glad to see Eph, as we always called him. You mind him, Becky?"

Here Becky's fingers tightened on my poor arm,

and pinched me so I really did think I'd have to cry out "Enough!"

The woman continued: "Oh, he could play 'Moneymusk' and the 'Devil's Dream' like witch-work! Seems to me if I'd hear him play them again I'd forget my years and my standing in the church, and go a-prancing and a-waltzing over the floor. Mrs. Britt says he struck out this morning to see the old landmarks and visit all the old places. Dear me, I mean to kill the fattest old hen in the yard, and I'll get all of you old acquaintances together, and won't we have a time!"

I pinched dear old Becky till she caught her breath, but neither of us breathed a word, only I said: "O Mrs. Bennett, you are one of the kindest, best, jolliest women that ever was, and please don't forget to invite me to your party. I'm a marriageable woman, and your old boy Ephraim is left alone without a housekeeper, and who knows what might come to pass!"

We three went into the graveyard and paused under the big hickory-tree where stood the gray old frame of the bier on which coffins were carried. We looked around. There, under the willow, lay the Martin family; there by the stile the Taylors; there, next the Livingston monument, was buried all the Stuarts, from the old judge down to Ella's baby; and there, where the wild roses tangled and clambered like net-work, slept dear old pastor Rockaway and his blessed wife Esther Ann; and here, where the sod was so smooth, and compact, and sweetly shorn, and tended, was the grave of the little Newtons who were drowned. We walked slowly along the gravel walk down to the end of the yard, where lay the old neighbors who first settled in Cedar Valley; they were all buried close together, as they had lived, peaceful and in good friendship all their lives. The lot occupied by the Glenn family was surrounded by a dense privet hedge. We parted the glossy leaves and entered. We stepped back. We intruded. A fine-looking man, a little past middle age, was sitting on one of the low-lying slabs, his back turned toward us. We attempted to retreat, when his eye caught a view of the face of Mrs. Bennett, and the two, with exclamations of delight, shook hands most cordially.

"Dear old Eph!" she said, patting his shoulder. "I am so glad to see you! I just heard of your arrival, and was planning how to get all the old boys and girls of 1848 together at my house. Say, you mind Becky, don't you, Eph—Becky Goodman? I believe you will remember her."

And their two good right hands crossed palms, and they looked into each other's faces with eyes sharpened by olden memories, and they shook and shook; and then when Becky modestly endeavored to let go his hand, it wouldn't loosen its

clasp, but shook as though it meant dead earnestness.

Then I said: "Mrs. Bennett, did you see that new monument of John Crawford's? It is so modest and unpretending, I want you to see it."

And we turned our backs on the twain, just met after long, long years, and went to see the beautiful pinky-gray marble at the other side of the yard. And Becky sat down beside Ephraim on the great stone slab behind the green, glossy curtain of privet leaves; and the poor dears began, away back at that time when ugly mammy stuck a fork over the door-latch to debar the entrance of the gay young fiddler, and they talked on and on, and dinner waited in two or three homes for them, and wasn't eaten for dinner at all, because they didn't remember that it was customary for people to eat at noon. They were not hungry. They fared on food that nourished both soul and body as they sat there among the graves, oblivious to everything but themselves.

It was almost twilight when they parted, Becky and Ephraim, at the gate under the locust-trees at the home where she was visiting. And even there they lingered, and when they shook hands they shook long and tenderly, and both their faces were radiant, as though the dawn of a newer and a better day was breaking.

The next morning a tilting carriage stood at the gate, and impatient steeds champed the bits and pawed the green turf. The twain went out riding together. Ephraim made a cheerful widower, the folks said, and a merrier old maid than Becky they had not seen for many a day. And so they rode, and walked, and talked for a week or more, and then when neighbor Bennett invited us all to her house, one Thursday afternoon, the minister was invited, too; and the occasion was no common one, either, for Ephraim and Becky joined hands, and henceforth through life they will walk together, one in heart.

And so it came about that patient waiting was no loss to Becky, and that after all the years gone by she became the bride of the attractive young fiddler, and will adorn his home and comfort his life, and be to him companion, and counselor and friend.

ROSELLA RICE.

SOLID GROUND.—Never affect to be other than you are—either richer or wiser. Never be ashamed to say, "I do not know." Men will then believe you when you say, "I do know." Never be ashamed to say, whether as applied to time or money, "I cannot afford it," "I cannot afford to waste an hour in the idleness to which you invite me," "I cannot afford the money you ask me to throw away." Once establish yourself and your mode of life as what they really are, and your foot is on solid ground, whether for the gradual step onward, or for the sudden spring over a precipice.

THE CHILDREN'S HOME.

A BALLAD STORY.

SHE sat in her ragged frock, with her shoeless, naked feet, outside the gates of a large and beauteous garden—a little, pale-faced, wan-looking child, with thick, matted hair hanging round her thin cheeks and shading her large, hazel eyes, that had in them a sad, weary, wistful look.

In the beautiful garden, on which her constant gaze was fixed, the noble children, whose home was there, were playing also, but so differently from the ragged children beside her. They had the earth, and the stones, and the leaves for toys; these others had some beautiful-looking things—hoops and sticks, covered with red and white—which the elder ones tossed to one another; and the little ones had lovely dolls, and a horse, and wagon, and balls. And Annie had come daily to her seat beneath an old oak-tree to watch these happy children at their play; and soon she found that one amongst them never played, but lay on a rug with a crimson shawl thrown over him, and the others gathered handfuls of flowers and fruits to bring him, and made him umpire to their games, and many times came and kissed his pale, sweet face. And thenceforth Annie would go nowhere, so long as she could crawl, but to the old oak-tree to watch the little invalid. The toys and the ruddy-healthy children had lost their charm now that pale face lived in her little heart. One day she ventured to go close to the fence, and, leaning against it, kept her faithful watch. She had been there but a short time when she heard a voice say: "Oh! what a poor, sorry-looking child. Let me give her a flower, please, nurse. Here, little girl." And he smiled a soft, faint smile at the very thin, small hand "stretched out so eagerly" to grasp the sweet, blush rose he had given her; but the smile vanished quickly, and he said, "I am tired, nurse, take me in."

"And I am tired, so tired," murmured Annie, as she crawled slowly away, holding fast the beautiful blossom in her hand.

She went at once, on reaching her home, to the little, miserable room where she slept with her brothers and sisters, and flung herself down on what was called a bed that she shared with her youngest sister. Many a night, in stillness and darkness, the child had lain burnt with fever and racked with pain, staring out at the small, unshaded window at the stars glimmering in the sky, at the moon sailing there in its glorious beauty, bathing all nature with its soft, silvery light, like God's blessing on His beautiful works, or watching the faint streak of dawn, listening to the glad hymn of the awakened birds, and wondering if she should ever feel glad to wake—ever feel as though she would sing for joy as those happy little birds seemed to do. She grew weaker every

day, she knew that, and she was so tired now that she could not get up to go to tea with the others. The poor mother brought her some, and sat on the bed, trying to make her eat a little, but she could not fancy the bread and salt butter; she drank the tea eagerly—she was always thirsty—and she showed her mother the beautiful rose the little sick gentleman had given her, and asked to have it put into water and placed of the chair close beside her.

"I should like to go inside those gates to that beautiful garden, and sit beside him always, mother," she said.

"Ah! they wouldn't let such as us in there, dear," answered her mother. "I'll come in again presently to see about you, if you don't want to come in the sitting-room."

And the mother, with her eyes filled with tears, tears wrung from her weary heart, for the hopelessness of any joy, or comfort, or cure to be found for her child in this world, went into the other room to feed the others.

For some days Annie lay in her bed, unable, unwilling to move, occupying herself with tending the rose which had opened beautifully in the water, and which the child talked to in soft, caressing tones, as if to another little child. One day, when the sun was streaming into the small room, she asked to be dressed and helped to her old seat beneath the oak tree. It was not far, but she could scarcely, even with her mother's help, get there. They seated her on the little mossy knoll she had chosen, from which she could see the happy children; but he was not there—the sweet little "white face had vanished, the little feet gone away."

There was a grand funeral at the old village church; and a very tiny coffin was laid in the newly-dug grave. Flowers covered it, as they had covered the little waxen form therein, and the muffled bell kept tolling all the day, and the little happy children cared not for toys or play, but sat huddled together with tears in their once bright eyes—tears for the sorrow that had come to them all.

Annie was very, very ill, and in a weak, low voice she asked for whom the bell was tolling. The little lord had gone home to Heaven, her mother told her. A sweet, bright smile illumined her poor, thin face, and laying her head back on her pillow, she said, "I shall soon see him again, then," and in a few moments she was asleep. Poor little lassie, as she slept there she saw a bright, bright light filling all the little room, and she heard a sound of many sweet voices singing a hymn she had learned to sing in her Sunday-school:

"There's a rest for little children
Above the bright blue sky,
Who love the Blessed Saviour,
And to the Father cry—

A rest from every turmoil,
From sin and sorrow free,
Where every little pilgrim
Shall rest eternally."

And as they sang she saw the ceiling of the room rising higher and higher; and above, instead of the discolored plaster, a pure, bright blue sky, and two fair angels holding in their arms two children.

One is the "pale, pale face" that has lived in her dreams, and the other herself surely! "There every little pilgrim shall rest eternally"—not only the nobleman, but the beggar maid would find rest and happiness; there in that bright home, where there were no tears, no sufferings, no gilded gates to separate the rich from the poor, all equal in the sight of the Divine eyes.

"Take me—take me," she cries, holding out her thin, weak arms.

"I am here, Annie dear; I'm here. Mother is beside you."

"Mother! Oh! do not hold me; we are going home together."

And a smile of divine beauty illumined all her face as she fell back in her mother's arms, at rest forever.

"And that high-born child and the beggar
Passed homewards side by side;
For the ways of men are narrow,
But the gates of Heaven are wide."

AUTHOR OF "A TRAP TO CATCH A SUNBEAM."

THE CLERK'S MARRIAGE.

"YOU are a brave young man, or a very foolish one."

"Why do you say that?"

"To think of marriage."

"What has bravery or folly to do in the case?"

"The young lady is poor."

"I do not wed for money."

"There would be some hope for you if she were the possessor of twenty or thirty thousand dollars. But being as poor as yourself, the folly of this purpose stands out in bold relief. Look before you leap, my friend; there's trouble for you on the other side."

"I am not sordid, Mr. Blair." The young man's fine face glowed, and his eyes flashed with repressed indignation.

"Not sordid enough, Adrian, for marriage, as society is now constituted. There are two sides to this question of marriage: the sentimental side, and the matter-of-fact side. Now, you have looked only at the sentimental side. Suppose we consider the matter-of-fact aspects. You are a clerk, receiving a salary of twelve hundred dollars. How much have you saved?"

"Nothing to speak of."

"Nothing! So much the worse. If it costs you twelve hundred dollars per annum to live, from whence is to come the means of supporting a wife and family?"

"Oh, I've been careless and wasteful in expenditure, as most young men are. I had only myself to provide for, and was self-indulgent. But that will cease, of course."

"Granted, for argument's sake. The young lady you propose to marry is named Rosa Newell?"

"Yes."

"A charming girl; well educated; finely accomplished; used to good society, as we say, and just suited for my friend Adrian, if she had money, or he an income of five thousand a year. But the idea of making her a happy wife, in the City of New York, on twelve hundred dollars, is simply preposterous. It can't be done, sir; and the attempt will prove ruinous to the happiness of both parties to so foolish an arrangement. It is a matter of the easiest demonstration, Adrian; and I wonder so good an accountant as you are should not, ere this, have tried the question by mathematical rules. Let me do it for you. And, first, we look at Rosa's present sphere of life. She has a home with Mr. Hart, an uncle, and is living in rather a luxurious way. Mr. Hart is a man who thinks a great deal of appearances, and maintains a domestic establishment that does not cost less than five thousand dollars a year. His house-rent is equal to your whole salary. Now, in taking Rosa from this home, into what kind of a one can you place her?"

A sober hue of thought came over the young man's face.

"You cannot afford to rent a house at even one-half the cost of Mr. Hart's, even if you were able to buy furniture," continued Mr. Blair.

"We shall board, of course," said Adrian. "Housekeeping is not to be thought of in the beginning."

"If not in the beginning, how afterward?"

The young man looked a trifle bewildered, but did not answer.

"What are you now paying for board?"

"Ten dollars a week."

"You would require a parlor and bed-room after marriage?"

"Yes."

"At a cost of not less than twenty dollars a week."

Adrian sighed.

"We could scarcely afford the parlor."

"Scarcely," said his friend. "Well, we give up the parlor, and take a pleasant front chamber on the second floor, at fifteen dollars a week. But the house is not first-class, nor the location very desirable. These are not to be had in New York at fifteen dollars a week. We cannot afford for

Rosa the elegances of her present home. Five dollars a week more for washing and *et ceteras*, and your income is drawn upon at the rate of one thousand and forty dollars a year. One hundred and sixty dollars left for clothing and all other expenses! And, so far, it has taken nearly three times that sum to meet your own demands. It has a bad look, Adrian."

"I was wasteful and self-indulgent," replied the young man, in a voice from which the confident tone had departed. "It will scarcely cost Rosa and me for clothing one-half of what I expended."

"Say one-half, and your income will not reach the demand. What was your tailor's bill last year?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"Say three hundred, including boots, hats, *et cetera*."

"Yes"

"You could scarcely get this below a hundred."

"Perhaps not."

The young man's voice was growing husky.

"That will leave sixty dollars for your wife's clothing, and nothing for pleasures, recreations or unanticipated but unavoidable expenses. And if it be so with you two in good health, what will be the condition of things in sickness, and with children to support and educate? Adrian, my young friend, there is debt, embarrassment, disappointment and a miserable life before you. Pause and retrace your steps before it is too late. If you love Rosa, spare her from this impending fate. Leave her in her pleasant home, or to grace that of a man better able than you to provide her with the external blessings of life. You cannot marry on twelve hundred dollars a year, and it is folly to think of it."

"We could get boarding for twelve dollars a week," said Adrian.

"That would scarcely help the matter at all. At best, it would only make a difference in the amount of your indebtedness at the close of each year. It is folly to think of it, my young friend. You can't afford to marry."

"It has a dark look, but there is no holding up now," replied Adrian, in a gloomy way. "We have mutually pledged each other, and the day of our marriage has been appointed."

"I'm sorry for you," said the friend, a bachelor of forty, who, on an income of two thousand a year, could see no possible chance for a happy marriage in the City of New York, and preferred celibacy to the embarrassments which he saw hundreds of his friends encounter in their attempts to live in a style out of all proportion to their resources. "I'm sorry for you," he repeated; "but if you will bend your neck to the yoke, you must not complain of the burden you find yourself compelled to bear."

Strange as it may appear, the young clerk,

Henry Adrian, had never before looked this matter of income, expenditure and style of living fairly in the front. The actual aspect of the case, when clearly seen, threw his mind into a state of troubled bewilderment. He went over and over again the calculations suggested by Mr. Blair, a

he looked at the truth, the more heavily came the pressure of its stony weight upon his heart. To go forward was little less than madness, yet how could he hold back now?

Rosa sat alone, reading, in one of her uncle's handsome parlors, waiting for her lover. He was



"ADRIAN AND HIS WIFE WERE ON THE PIAZZA, PREPARED TO RECEIVE HIM."—p. 638.

bookkeeper in the establishment where he was employed, cutting off a little from one proposed expenditure and another, but not being able to get the cost of living down to the range of his salary, except when the style was so far below that in which his wife must move, that he turned half sick from its contemplation. The more steadily

later than usual; so late that her book began to lose its interest, and at last lay closed on her lap, while a shade fell over her expectant face. A single glance at Rosa's countenance revealed the fact that she was a girl of some character. There was no soft, voluptuous languor about her, but an erectness of position as she sat, and a firmness of

tone in all her features, that indicated an active mind and self-reliance.

An hour later than usual, Adrian came.

"Are you sick, Henry?" asked Rosa, as she took his hand, and fixed her eyes on his sober face.

"Not sick, but troubled in mind," he replied, without evasion.

"Why are you troubled, Henry?" And Rosa drew an arm tenderly around her lover.

"Sit down, and I will tell you. The trouble concerns us both, Rosa."

The young girl's face grew pale. They sat down close together, holding each other's hands. But in Adrian's countenance there was a resolute expression, such as we see in the countenance of a man who has settled a question of difficult solution.

"The day fixed for our marriage is only two months distant," he said.

The tone in which he spoke chilled the heart of Rosa. She did not answer, but kept her gaze on his face.

"Rosa, we must reconsider this matter. We have acted without forethought."

Her face became paler, her lips fell apart, her eyes had a frightened expression.

"I love you, Rosa, tenderly, truly. My heart is not turning from you. I would hasten, rather than retard, the day of our marriage. But there are considerations beyond that day, which have presented themselves, and demand thoughtfulness. In a word, Rosa, I cannot afford to marry. My income will not justify the step."

The frightened look went out of Rosa's eyes.

"It was wrong in me ever to have sought your love."

Her hand tightened on his, and she shrank closer to his side.

"I am a clerk, with an income of only twelve hundred dollars, and I do not see much beyond to hope for. Rosa, the furniture of these parlors cost twice the amount of my salary. The rent of the home in which you now live is equal to what I receive in a year. I cannot take you from all this elegance into a third-class boarding-house, the best my means will provide. No, no, Rosa; it would be unjust, selfish, wrong, cruel. How blind in me ever to have thought of so degrading the one I love!"

The young man was strongly agitated.

"And this is all that troubles you, Henry?"

"Is it not enough? Can I look at the two alternatives that present themselves, and not grow heart-sick? If we marry, what is before us? Humiliation, deprivation and all the ills that poverty brings for you, and debt, trouble and a life-long embarrassment for me. If we separate, each taking different ways in life—O Rosa, Rosa,

I am not strong enough to choose that alternative!"

And his form trembled under the pressure of excitement.

"You love me, Henry?" The voice of Rosa was calm, yet burdened with feeling.

"As my own life, darling! Have I not said so a hundred times?"

"And even as my life do I love you, Henry."

For several moments her face lay hidden in his bosom. Then lifting it, Rosa said: "I am glad you have spoken on this subject, Henry. I could not approach it myself, but, now that we have it before us, let it be well considered. Your income is twelve hundred dollars?"

"Yes."

"A sum large enough to supply all the real wants of two persons who have independence enough not to be enslaved by a mere love of appearances."

"Why, darling, it will require more than half of my salary to pay for respectable boarding."

"Taking it for granted that, after our marriage, I am to sit down in a boarding-house, with hands folded, an idle dependent on your labor. But I shall not so construe my relation to my husband. I will be a helpmeet for him. I will stand by his side, sharing life's burdens."

"All that is in your heart, darling, I know," returned Adrian. "But we are hedged round with social forms that act as a hindrance. You cannot help me. Society will demand of us a certain style of living, and we must conform to it, or be pushed aside from all circles of refinement, taste and intelligence. I cannot accept this ostracism for you, Rosa. It is not right."

"As if a false, heartless world were more to me than a true, loving husband! Henry, the central point of social happiness is home; as the home is, so will our lives be—rather let me say, as we are, so will our homes be—centres of gloom or brightness. What others think of us is really of little account in making up the sum of our enjoyments as we pass through life; but what we are in ourselves is everything. We must be the centres of our own world of happiness, or our lives will be incomplete. Can a fine establishment like this in which I live in weak dependence, fill the measure of my desires? Can it bring peace and contentment? No, no, Henry. The humblest apartments, shared with you, would be a palace to my soul instead. I am not speaking with the romantic enthusiasm of an ardent girl, but soberly, truthfully, Henry. No, dearest, we will not make our lives wretched by living apart, because we cannot make a fair appearance in other people's eyes. God has given us love for each other, and the means of happiness if we will use them. Let us take His good gifts in thankfulness. You have an income of twelve hundred dollars. We must

not expect to live as those do who have as many thousands a year. Be that folly far from us, Henry! I am equal to the self-denial it will require, if the word 'self-denial' is to be used. Are not you also? O Henry! is there any joy to be imagined beyond that which flows from the conjunction of two loving hearts? And shall pride and a weak spirit of social conformity come in to rob us of our blessing?"

The young man had come, sternly resolved to put off the day of marriage. He parted from his betrothed that night, looking forward with golden-hued hopes of its arrival. They had talked over the future practically and sensibly. The lover's fond pride, which had looked to a fair social appearance for his young wife, gave place to a better view of things. He saw that his love had fixed itself upon a true woman, and that in the humbler sphere in which their lot was cast all attainable happiness was in store for them, if they would but open their hearts in an orderly way for its reception. One thing said to him by Rosa in that evening's talk we repeat for the sake of young wives or maidens on the eve of marriage:

"Be mine, dear Henry," she said, "the task of ordering and regulating our domestic affairs in conformity with your means. I will give all thought to that. Your income is fixed, and I shall know exactly the range of expenditure we must adopt. Do not fear debt and embarrassment. These wretched forms shall never enter your home while I stand sentinel at the door. If the husband gives his life to care and work, shall not the wife do the same? If he provide to the best of his ability, shall not she dispense with wise frugality his earning? She that fails to do this, is not worthy of her position."

"And so you are bent on this folly?" said the bachelor clerk, on the day preceding that on which Adrian was to be married.

"Yes, if you choose to call it folly," was the answer.

"Where are you going?"

"We shall go nowhere."

"What! Not make a bridal tour?"

"No. A clerk who only receives a salary of twelve hundred dollars can't afford to spend two hundred in making a bridal tour."

Mr. Blair shrugged his shoulders and arched his eyebrows, as much as to say: "If I couldn't afford a bridal tour, I'd not marry."

On the day after Adrian's wedding, he was at his usual place in the counting-house. He received from his fellow-clerks a few feeble congratulations. Most of them thought him a fool to burden himself with a wife not worth a dollar.

"When I marry, I'll better my condition—not make it worse," was the unspoken thought of more than one.

"Where are you boarding?" asked Mr. Blair,

indifferently, two or three weeks after Adrian's marriage.

"Nowhere," was replied. "We are at house-keeping."

"What?"

"At house-keeping."

"What is your rent?"

"Two hundred dollars, and half of that my wise, good little wife is to pay in music-lessons to our landlady's daughters. We have two pleasant rooms in a fine old country mansion in New Jersey, not an hour's ride from the office here. I furnished these with the money it would have taken for the usual bridal tour. Rosa has the use of the kitchen, and insists on doing her own cooking and housework for the present. I demurred, and do demur; but she says that 'work is worship,' if performed conscientiously and dutifully, as she is performing it. And, with all this, we are very happy, Mr. Blair, as you shall witness. To-morrow you must pay us a visit, take tea and spend the evening."

Mr. Blair accepted the invitation. He had met Rosa occasionally before her marriage, and knew her to be a bright, accomplished young woman, fitted to move in refined and intelligent circles, and he felt some curiosity to see her in the new position of mistress and maid to her own household. The train took Mr. Blair to within a short distance of the home where Henry Adrian and his courageous wife were located. A few minutes' walk brought him to the old place, with its fine, healthy, country aspect. Expecting him by that train, Adrian and his wife were on the piazza, prepared to receive him, and after the customary greetings they led him up-stairs to their own apartments—not with stammering apologies for their poor home; but with such ease and self-possession—with such a happy light in their eyes, and with such loving smiles about their lips—that Mr. Blair found himself all at once transferred to an earthly paradise. As soon as opportunity came for observation, he became interested in noting what was around him.

The furniture of the room into which he had been ushered could scarcely have been plainer. In the centre stood a small breakfast-table, covered with a snowy cloth, and set for three persons. Four cane-seat chairs, a work-stand, a hanging-shelf for books, a mantle ornament or two of no special value, an ingrain carpet on the floor, and plain white curtains looped back with blue ribbons, made up the complete inventory. No, not the complete inventory, for there was a piano against the wall, the dark case and plain style of which showed it to be no recent purchase. The instrument had been Rosa's, as the observant visitor correctly inferred.

After a pleasant talk of some minutes, Rosa left the room, and not long after returned, bearing a

tray on which were tea, toast, butter, biscuit, cold tongue and sweetmeats. There was a beautiful glow on her face as she entered, but nothing of shame or hurt pride. With her own fair hands she arranged the table, and then took her place at the head to serve her husband and his friend.

The heart of Mr. Blair glowed and stirred with a new impulse as he looked into the pure, sweet, happy face of the young wife, as she poured the tea and served the meal which she had prepared.

After supper, Rosa removed the tea-things, and was absent nearly half an hour. She returned through her chamber, which adjoined their little parlor, breakfast and sitting-room, all in one, with just the slightest change in her attire, and looking as fresh, happy and beautiful as if entering a drawing-room filled with company. The evening passed in reading, music and pleasant conversation. As Mr. Blair was about retiring, Adrian said: "Do you think now that we were fools to marry?"

Rosa stood with her hand drawn within one arm of her husband and clasped, and with a face radiantly happy.

A shade crept over Mr. Blair's countenance.

"No, not fools, but wise, as others might be, if they were only courageous enough to do as you have done. Mrs. Adrian," and he took the young wife's hand, "I honor your bravery, your independence, your true love that cannot be overshadowed by worldliness, that mildew of the heart, that blight on our social life. You are a thousand times happier in your dutiful seclusion than any fashion-loving wife or slave to external appearances can ever be."

"I love my husband, and I live for him," Rosa leaned closer to the manly form by her side. "I understood when we married that he was a life-toiler; that our home would be established and sustained by the work of his hands; and I understood as well that I was not his superior, but only his equal, and that if it was right and honorable for him to work, it could be no less right and honorable for me. Was I to sit idle, and have a servant to wait on me, when his was a lot of toil? No—no—no! I had my part to perform as well as he, and I am performing it to the best of my ability."

"You are a true woman, a wise woman, a good woman," said Mr. Blair, with ardor; "and you will be as happy as you deserve to be. I thought Henry a fool to marry on twelve hundred dollars, and told him so. But I take back my words. If such women as you were plentiful, we could all marry, and find our salaries ample. Good-night, and may God bless you!"

And the bachelor clerk, who could not afford to marry on two thousand dollars a year, went to his lonely home—lonely, though peopled thickly—

and sitting down in his desolate chamber, dreamed over the sweet picture of domestic felicity he had seen, and sighed for a like sweet hiding-place from the world, and all false protection and heartless show.

T. S. A.

CARINA.

CARINA, see the stars look down
From out the quiet, solemn sky,
And song-birds twitter soft and low
Because they hear thee passing by.
The night wind lifts thy tresses bright,
Tossing them gayly here and there,
And marvels 'neath their shade to find
A brow so radiantly fair.

Carina Mia! tell me, sweet,
How is one loving heart to guess
Whether the other keeps for it
A single thought of tenderness?
Ah! see how quick the answer comes
In the swift flash, so keenly bright,
That, sweeping o'er the upturned face,
Floods it with soft and tender light!

But, O Carina! canst thou know
How sweetly mad this love of mine
That treasures up each word and look,
Or dainty little touch of thine,
Counting, as miser doth his hoard,
Each plaintive sigh or gentle smile
Thou deignest to bestow on one
Who loves thee more and more the while?

Carina! lo, the stars grow pale
Before the lovelight in thine eyes;
Hearing the love-tones in thy voice,
The song-birds hush in sweet surprise;
While undisturbed thy tresses lie,
And the night wind, with touch as light
As any lover's, leaves a kiss
Among their waves so softly bright.

RUTH ARGYLE.

INJURED ONES.—A number of people possess what may be called an aptitude for injury. They not only accept it at every turn and receive it at every pore, but actually seem to hunt it up and lie in wait for it. Nothing falls that does not hit them; nothing breaks that does not hurt them; nothing happens in any way that they do not reap a golden harvest of wrong from it. These people are miserable, as a matter of course—that goes without saying; but they would be utterly and hopelessly miserable if they could not at any moment scrape the substance of an injury together to solace some heavy hour destitute of other excitement.

WHICH WAY.

MRS. HUNTLEY, with quick step, was leaving McCreedy's wholesale and retail grocery store, after punctually settling the month's account, when, glancing up at a window in the hotel opposite, she was sure she recognized in the marked and pleasant lineaments of the lady idly gazing down into the street the features of an old friend and schoolmate.

Mrs. Huntley crossed the street, and, ascending the stairs to the parlor, was soon in the embrace of the companion of her girlhood.

Ellen Earl was making a brief stay in town, called hither on some business matters relating to legal claims on the family estate. Having an immediate appointment with her lawyer, only a brief interview was possible, and the friends parted with the understanding that Ellen would spend the afternoon of the next day at Mrs. Huntley's house, and meet several mutual friends residing in the same town.

"I did not know that our old friend Fanny Osgood was living here," said Ellen. "It will be indeed a great pleasure to meet her and the others of whom you speak. I knew that your home was here some years ago, but did not know whether you had removed, and doubted whether I would have time to hunt you up in this large town. People change so, too; I could not know that I would find you the same Kitty Huntley of old, that you are!" and a moisture came to the eyes of the sensitive, reticent, yet large-souled woman, who had seen many experiences, and not always the sunny side of life.

The next morning, as Mrs. Huntley was giving the children their little lessons, the servant came up to announce a caller.

"She did not give her name, but seemed to be in a great hurry. She was in a hurry before when I let her in," said Janet. "She's only been here once since I came to live with you."

"Is it Mrs. Osgood?"

"Oh, yes'm, that's the name. I remember her now."

Mrs. Huntley quickly, but with the bright serenity that was habitual to her, descended to the parlor and greeted her friend.

"Never mind, don't make me too comfortable," said the guest, as Mrs. Huntley drew an easier chair. "I can only stay a very few moments. I stopped on the way to the committee meeting to make my 'regrets' in person, and tell you how very sorry I am that is impossible for me to accept your kind invitation for this afternoon to meet Ellen Earl. I found your note when I got home from the missionary meeting yesterday afternoon."

"I am sorry," said Mrs. Huntley. "Ellen leaves early to-morrow morning, and she expressed especial pleasure in the expectation of meeting

you. I am to send the carriage out for Hetty Ford, and I thought we would get together as many of the old set as possible."

"I would like to come," said Mrs. Osgood, putting back from her brow the disheveled locks of dark hair, sprinkled with gray, that clustered around her temples, "but everything is in a tangle, and I really can't take the time. We must work in faith, you know, while the day lasts, even if we don't see any fruit. Sometimes I get most discouraged."

"Stay here this morning, and let us talk it over," said Mrs. Huntley, reaching for a bit of embroidery that, with threaded needle, peered temptingly from the little fancy work-table.

"Oh, I can't think of such a thing! We have to make arrangements about the church festival, you know, and I have to report at the committee meeting this morning as to who will give cake and cream, and attend the tables. Then I must go and see about a sewing-woman that is giving me a heap of trouble."

"My seamstress is a treasure, and she leaves me to-morrow. She can go to you if you wish to engage her," suggested Mrs. Huntley.

"One is enough at a time, and rather too much," returned Mrs. Osgood. "The poor woman I employed—a perfect stranger to me—was distressingly in need of work, and we must help such cases, you know. I hired a machine for her to use at my house. I was sick, and she worried me into saying she could take it home to her rooms, so as to use evenings. I meant to 'change my mind' about it next day. But she sent an express-wagon for it in fifteen minutes after I gave my consent. I suspected she had stolen a lot of passementerie trimming, and I did not want to offend her and have trouble till I got it back again. So I had to let the sewing machine go. Early this morning I got a message from the agent of the firm I rented it of, saying that they would have me arrested for letting that machine go out of my possession. My husband has been sick in bed two or three days. He is nervous as a witch; he heard the man talk, and it worries him in his weak state. I promised him I would see the firm and the woman, too, before I came home, and have it all settled up. So you see I have my hands full. I am always in some kind of 'a scrape,' I believe, and yet I do try to do good, and I don't believe I'm a bit of a 'shirk.'"

Mrs. Huntley smiled. "I am not sure that I know just what you mean."

"No, of course you do not. You have no similar experiences. You have 'a way of your own' in doing your church work, and nothing ever clashes with you. Yet you do twice the good I do."

"I don't do any good," said Mrs. Huntley, quietly, with great candor of tone.

"That's nonsense, now," said the animated lady. "It's good, one kind of good, to think of everybody and make people happy, as you do. For instance, Ellen Earl. She is good as gold, but you know she never was one of the attractive kind, nor one that had or expected much social attention. She only came here yesterday, yet you manage to find it out, call on her and arrange a little welcome for her, and 'bid' us all; though I used to be twice as intimate with the family—that is, with the cousin that lived with them—than you were with Ellen or Lou, either. She will tell over to the whole clan when she gets home what a pleasant time you made for her, and I'm glad of it. But I shouldn't have had the time, as you see. And there you are working on that embroidery for the festival. What a quantity of it you have done. I expect there will be one or two of my 'pensioners' waiting for me when I get home—poor people I'm helping. I'm driven to death, and I don't seem to be prospered, either. I tried to do a little good in helping that woman, but I'm afraid I've only encouraged her in evil; and I'm almost sure she stole money from me as well as dress-trimming, and it was money my sister sent to have me purchase her a dress with. Do tell me what your 'way' is—what the secret is of your doing so much good so *smoothly* as you do."

"I don't do any good," again repeated the quiet tones.

"You never was a bit of a hypocrite, and I never thought you were. I don't see how you can sit there and say you 'don't do any good.'"

A little momentary struggle showed itself in Mrs. Huntley's face.

"All good is the Lord's, and from Him," she said, with drooping eyes. "If we try to put away evils as sins against Him, He helps us, and then His 'good' flows in. There are no vacuums in spiritual life any more than in natural life. If we put away evil—and that is our 'part' to do—good flows in from the Lord."

"That is a new view of things to me," said straightforward Mrs. Osgood. "But do you mean to say you don't *try* to do good?"

Mrs. Huntley smiled. "It takes me all the time to fight evil, I fear," she said. "We must, of course, compel ourselves to do right even if it is distasteful to us at the first. But I am not very wise. I am afraid I would not always know what *was* good, in the practical perplexities of life, if I did not see by shunning the opposite evil."

"Has every good thing an opposite evil?" spoke Mrs. Osgood, in surprise.

"Yes, I find I can only see my duty, and the way for my 'feet to walk,' by avoiding the evil. When I do so, light flows in."

"Won't you state it more plainly? This is all news to me."

"You can easily see, as regards Ellen, that

there was no merit, even in a social point of view, in my 'managing to find her out,' as you call it."

"You were not fighting evil then, were you?" laughingly interrupted Mrs. Osgood.

"Yes, the evil of indebtedness, the injustice of unnecessary debt. I always settle our housekeeping bills the last of every month. I knew M'Cready would be perfectly willing to wait, or presumed he would, and it was a real temptation to let the matter wait, and to stay at home, using the funds for another purpose. But payment was due, according to understanding. I put away, fought against, the sin against charity and what I call dishonesty, and went. There was no merit in it. It was only right; it was the way that you call 'smooth.' Mr. M'Cready, however, was making out bank payments, meeting some notes due, and he thanked me for coming within banking hours. My feet were in the plain way of ordinary duty, nothing more. I glanced up at a window and saw Ellen. There was no merit in that. The Lord's Providence brought us together. I was glad enough!"

"I never thought it was a 'sin against charity' not to pay a debt!" was the only response Mrs. Osgood made.

"Charity is love. That is the meaning of the word. It is not love to our neighbor to withhold what is due him. If all paid just wages, and acted in love in yielding both service and pay, there would not be so much need for benevolent societies."

"I've often put off the payment of a bill, or of wages, to contribute to some relief association in need," said the lady, frankly.

"I would not dare," said Mrs. Huntley. "If my feet strayed out of the plain way of love to my neighbor, I should fear no blessing would follow."

"I knew you had some 'way of your own.' Please tell me how you act by this theory. It is not clear to me about shunning evils," said Mrs. Osgood.

Mrs. Huntley saw that her friend was in earnest, and proceeded: "If I put away disorder from my home, emphatically fighting it as an evil, I have order as a result. If I shun extravagance and unwise expenditure, I have thrift. If I combat idleness and waste of time, I have a degree of leisure enabling me to do such dainty work as this," and she smoothed out the embroidery. "If I drive back the quick, angry tone, my words calm rather than irritate. If I avoid becoming a mere parasite on the church, I was going to say, I contribute the support owed and which is due to the maintenance of the ordinances. I do it with pleasure, it is true; but when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants. There is no merit in it. It is only the normal condition of things, which evil indulged interrupts. We are to resist the evil. That is our part. There is none that doeth good, not one. There is none good save One, that is

God. To claim as ours the good wrought through us, is to rob God."

"This is new to me as a foreign tongue," said Mrs. Osgood. "I was always taught to 'do good.' Sermons urge us to increased activity in religious work. Societies, and meetings, and home benevolence, and entertainment of strangers, drive me from morning till night. It is now time I met that committee; the devotional exercises must be over now; and it will take me twenty minutes to get there, and no doubt the chat and questions will detain me a long time after the hour of closing. It is hard to get away, you know, where every one suggests something and wants you to wait a minute," and the lady glanced apprehensively at the pretty cuckoo clock above the mantle. "I am late, tired, disturbed, hurried. What evil, according to your way of looking at things, shall I shun this hour? How shall I get harmonious? Show me how to practically use your theories."

"My dear friend, do you really want me to try to serve you in this manner?"

"Yes; you have some manner of discernment or principle of action, which I have called 'your way.' I have long seen it in your family and in your activities as a church member. I want to get at the secret."

"There is no secret," said Mrs. Huntley, as she took a piece of paper and a pencil and wrote rapidly a list of names. "It seems to me that the first evil to shun here is loneliness and need of attention on the part of your sick husband. At the same time you are responsible to our committee for the service you engaged to perform. Here is a list of names of the contributors to the festival. I have put ice cream against Mrs. You-man's name. She always gives it. Now you fill out the list of promised donations against the respective names. I will send John with this statement to the ladies, accompanying it with the message that sickness in your family prevents your attendance."

"Now," resumed Mrs. Huntley, having rung for John and given him instructions, "avoid injury to the good you have done that woman in employing her. Avoid counteracting the impression of your Christian kindness. Do not take away her character. Theft is not proved. What seems crooked, may possibly be explained. If not, and she is guilty, your tenderness and forbearance may win her to confession and reform. If this is not the case, the remembrance of it may come to her years hence. Genuine love revealed never can die. Avoid irritation and upbraiding even if you cause an arrest. Go in the love that first prompted you to befriend. Avoid, too, the very 'appearance of evil' with the sewing-machine company, even though they have been rude. Then you will go smooth and unruffled to cheer your weary and anxious patient when you get home."

Sudden moisture came to Mrs. Osgood's eyes.

"I feel clearer, calmer already," she said, rising at once and folding her shawl more closely around her tall and graceful figure. "I will not wait to discuss the principle, but everything seems clear. My 'way' has always been to ignore evils, pushing blindly for the good. But the evils are there, I see now, and they trap me at every step."

With a cordial hand-grasp the friends parted, and with elastic step Mrs. Osgood proceeded down the street.

"That's a lady, and no mistake!" said the representative of the sewing-machine firm when the gracious, frank, yet dignified apology was thought over after the caller had quitted the rooms.

"It appears to me just as if an angel had been in here!" said the sewing-woman, as she threw her apron over her face to hide the starting tears. "I can't get over it!" and feelings long sleeping, stirred, as Mrs. Osgood's footsteps were retreating down the rickety, tenement-house stairs, and waking memories of girlhood in a Christian home came like a benediction to blend with new aspirations in a tried and tempted, grieving heart.

A new light was in Mrs. Osgood's face, a new tone in her voice when she entered the room where her husband was wearily turning on his pillow.

"Has anything happened?" he asked, with a brightening look.

"Why?"

"You look so happy. That bonnet is very becoming, Fanny, and you look so rested."

"How do you feel, Robert?" Mrs. Osgood asked, after giving a brief outline of business transacted since morning.

"A little faint," was the reply. "I shall feel better when I have eaten something."

"You don't mean to say that you haven't had anything since I went away, do you? I gave Jane very particular instructions just how to cook your rice, and to bring it up when the children had their lunch."

"The rice was very well cooked. It looked tempting, but I could not eat it. You had salt mackerel for breakfast, didn't you?"

"There was some cooked," said Mrs. Osgood.

"I thought so. That was it. The plate had not been washed, I judge. A bit of the fish-skin stuck to it and showed me what the horrible flavor was! It took away the little appetite I had."

"I should think so!" exclaimed his wife, and then with a sudden change of expression and manifestation of feeling which Mr. Osgood was entirely unprepared for, his wife said, with starting tears and suppressed laughter contending with each other: "O Robert, that is just an excellent, if homely, illustration of all the good I ever tried to do in my life. Painstaking, careful offer-

ings on unwashed plates. Wasted labor and material, only fit to be rejected with disgust. The unfought, unremoved, tolerated evils permeating and spoiling all the hard-wrought good. I see it. Oh, I see it. It is clear as the light of day!"

"What in the world do you mean, Fanny?"

"The way to 'learn to do well,' is to 'cease to do evil' first. The Word puts it first. 'Cease to do evil, learn to do well.'"

"Well?"

"I will tell you what I mean by and by. I must go and take off my things and shake the dust off now."

In a very short time Mrs. Osgood reappeared bearing a waiter tempting with fresh damask of snowy whiteness, delicate china, shining silver and a lunch prepared by her own hands, with fragrant tea."

"This is nice," said Mr. Osgood. "No uncanny flavors here!"

"I am going to try to get rid of the bad flavors, Robert. I believe my scolding, fretful ways with the children spoil the real instruction and training I try to give them, and it's one reason I have so much trouble with the servants, too."

Mr. Osgood was too intensely surprised to make any immediate response. He was a genial, patient, facetious man, an upright, professing Christian. He respected and sympathized with his wife's principles and her "hobby" for "doing good." Why such right motives should work out such astounding results as they often did was one of the mysteries Mr. Osgood frequently reflected upon but never mentioned.

"I am sure, Fanny, you always try to do what is right in everything," he finally remarked, in a sympathizing tone.

"But it makes so much difference whether we take the Lord's way to do it or our own way. I was so irritated with that sewing-woman I could not have gone to her in positive love and with tender words. But when I went, looking to the Lord for strength to keep from sinning against Him by being harsh and vindictive, it just made me humble and seemed to bring Him so near, and the words seemed given me to say. It seems as though He was so ready to help us and do all for us if we just put the evil out of the way."

In the evening Mr. Osgood felt so much better that he sat in the family sitting-room, in dressing-gown and slippers.

When the children's study hour was over and little Frank's problems were not finished, peremptory words rose to Mrs. Osgood's lips. She was going to say, "Now I give you just fifteen minutes by the clock to get the answer to those two problems." She checked herself a moment, and said instead: "Come here, my son, and let me help you."

"Have you got time, mamma?" in surprised tones.

"Certainly, my boy."

The principle mastered, the grateful child lingered to say, bashfully: "You're a nice mamma," before gathering up his books and saying "good-night."

Just then Mrs. Huntley, Ellen Earl and Hatty Ford and others came in.

"We've adjourned our session devoted to 'Auld Lang Syne' memories to hold a brief postscript of a meeting here," said Mrs. Huntley.

Mr. Osgood congratulated himself on being up "in state" to receive them.

"These brief, severe attacks of mine that lead to long, nervous prostration afterward are getting less frequent for a year or two. Seeing so many old friends ought to cure me quite," he said, in answer to their inquiries, and to relieve their apprehensions of intruding on a sick man.

As the bery broke up later, the invalid said: "Your old reminiscences make me feel as though I was a young man again 'paying attention' to my wife, in Summerfield."

"I haven't seen her look so young and happy since her wedding day," said Hetty Ford. "So we'll make believe it's true."

"I am trying your 'way' in my home," said Fanny Osgood to Mrs. Huntley, as they stood aside to notice an opening rose in the window-garden while Hetty put on her wraps. "I hope I shall always walk in it, for, my dear friend, I believe it's the Lord's 'way,' and if it makes us feel our littleness, it shows us His strength and brings His tenderness and condescension very near, making us to dwell safely. My feet have only entered the way," she added, "but I see 'men as trees walking.' I believe my family are happier already on account of the new light that has dawned upon me."

MARY E. COMSTOCK.

HYACINTHS.—The double hyacinth is almost a creature of the last two hundred years, and all the older flowers are blue, purple or white in the illustrations to the works of Dodoens, for example, or John Gerarde. The crimson, the carmine and the tender yellow tints which now make hyacinths so prized among spring flowers are new. In about the year 1680 Peter Voorhelm, a Dutch grower of single hyacinths, who had carefully weeded out any plants that showed a tendency to become double, fell ill, and during his sickness several double seedlings showed themselves, and assumed so much beauty that Voorhelm had not the heart, when he recovered, to kill them. He found his tenderness to the double hyacinths pay very well, for bulbs of them soon began to sell for one thousand florins and two thousand florins in the same country which had just recovered from the tulip mania.

THE JEWISH BIBLE.

THE most ancient version of the Holy Scriptures is that known as the Septuagint; and it originated in a very curious way, the bibliomania of a heathen king. This was the Egyptian monarch, Ptolemy Philadelphus, second of the line, to whose indefatigable collecting powers the famous library of Alexandria principally owed its wonderful and varied resources.

This library began in a museum, which was not at all a collection of curiosities, but an institution of learning, composed of deeply-studious men, who were busied in philosophical and scientific researches. No expense was spared on this pet college of the Ptolemies, and the buildings were magnificent. The king who established it, immediately began to make a collection of books for the use of the members of the institution. This was attended with great expense, as every book that was added to the collection required to be transcribed with a pen on parchment or papyrus with infinite labor and care. Great numbers of scribes were constantly employed upon this work at the museum.

The kings who were most interested in forming this library would seize the books that were possessed by individual scholars, or that were deposited in the various cities of their dominions, and then causing beautiful copies of them to be made by the scribes of the museum, they would retain the originals for the great Alexandrian Library, and give the copies to the men or the cities that had been thus despoiled. In the same manner they would borrow, as they called it, from all travelers who visited Egypt, any valuable books which they might have in their possession, and, retaining the originals, give them back copies instead. In process of time, the library increased to four hundred thousand volumes.

Ptolemy Philadelphus resolved to make his pet library as great a wonder as the famous Pharos, in which he took so much pride; and with this view, he determined to procure either copies or originals—the latter if possible—of all the books in the world. Scholars were set at work in the museum to read and study with fresh diligence; and with more zeal than principle, messengers were dispatched to different countries to ascertain what books were to be found among other nations, and secure prizes wherever it was possible. When the originals could not be seized, neither expense, labor nor stratagem was spared to make as perfect copies as possible of the coveted volumes.

Athens afforded the richest spoils to these literary highwaymen in the works of the most celebrated Greek historians. This valuable "haul" was fairly gloated over; and after making exquisite copies of the volumes, the originals were safely transferred to the Alexandrian Library, and the

copies returned to the defrauded owners, handsomely accompanied by a large sum of money as an equivalent for the difference in value! Truly, it must have caused consternation among book-owners in those days to hear that Ptolemy Philadelphus intended to "borrow" some volumes.

This passion for book-collecting finally brought the Egyptian king in contact with the Jews; and it was speedily whispered to him that this "peculiar people" had especial claims upon his interest, for they treasured in their temple at Jerusalem some sacred writings which formed a very complete and interesting history of their nation from the earliest time, and included several volumes of sacred prophecy and poetry. These wonderful books were the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament, and had never yet been seen by any nation but the Jews, while even among them only the priests and the very learned could handle and read them. To take these sacred books from the Holy City, and to allow the profane eyes of Pagans and idolaters to rest upon them, would have been nothing short of desecration; while, as the Jewish language was unknown beyond the precincts of Judea and Galilee, the sight would have been no benefit to other nations.

But this account of rare and precious volumes, as yet unseen by outsiders, so fired the enthusiasm of Ptolemy Philadelphus, who displayed the most dogged perseverance in his favorite mania, that he resolved to secure these treasured writings at any cost. The Jews were not easy to get at in any way, as they held themselves aloof from all other nations; and to appropriate their whole literature at one fell swoop was a feat that required careful consideration. But it was also a feat that, if crowned with success, would shine as the most dazzling of all the exploits which had hitherto enriched the grand library.

In his wildest dreams, however, the king did not lift his eyes to the originals in this case; copies of such precious volumes would be sufficient triumph; and Ptolemy decided to have a copy made in the ancient Hebrew, and also a translation of the same into Greek, because of the numerous Greek and Roman scholars who flocked to Alexandria to benefit by the advantages afforded them by the various institutions of learning established there by this Egyptian monarch.

The subject of the acquisition of the Hebrew Scriptures having been diligently turned over in the mind of Ptolemy Philadelphus, he was finally visited by a happy inspiration. The thought had suggested itself that such a request from an Egyptian king would be less favorably received by the Jews because, "during certain wars which had taken place in previous reigns, a considerable number of prisoners had been taken by the Egyptians and had been brought to Egypt as captives,

where they had been sold to the inhabitants, and were scattered over the land as slaves. They were employed as servile laborers in tilling the fields, or in turning enormous wheels to pump up water from the Nile. The masters of these helpless bondmen conceived, like other slaveholders, that they had a right of property in their slaves."

The king's grand idea was to give these slaves their freedom and permission to return to their native land, in the hope that such unusual conduct on the part of an Egyptian monarch would so please the Jews as a nation that his cherished desire of obtaining a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures would be granted. He paid a very high sum to those who held the Jewish slaves for their ransom, ancient historians asserting that one hundred and twenty thousand captives were liberated at an expense of six hundred talents, or about six hundred thousand dollars.

This, however, was only the beginning of the munificent expenditure by which Ptolemy accomplished his object. A splendid embassy was sent to Jerusalem, with such magnificent presents and such reverential letters to the high priest that the ambassadors were received with the highest honors. The humble request preferred by the Egyptian monarch that he should be allowed to make a copy of those wonderful sacred writings of which he had heard such accounts, and which he should regard as the brightest ornaments of his already famous library, was granted without the least opposition.

The Jewish priests had copies made in a style of magnificence to correspond with the lavish generosity of the heathen king, with illuminated golden letters; and not only this, but at Ptolemy's suggestion six Hebrew scholars from each tribe, who were thoroughly versed both in Hebrew and Greek, were dispatched to Alexandria for the express purpose of making at the museum a more careful and thorough translation than could elsewhere be accomplished of these valuable writings into pure Greek. The work of these seventy-two translators was called the Septuagint, from *Septuaginta duo*—seventy-two.

Hitherto no one out of Judea had cared for, or even known of, these Hebrew Scriptures; but the trouble and expense bestowed upon their possession by Ptolemy Philadelphus, soon made them famous. The Greek and Roman scholars who resorted to Alexandria found them both interesting and instructive as curious works of history; and although not regarded as books of Divine authority, a certain acquaintance with them became the fashion in literary circles of those days. The Septuagint translation was freely copied, and found its way to other countries besides Egypt; then copies of these copies were made, until, by degrees, scholars all over the world became familiar with the most ancient version of the Bible.

When Christianity had finally extended over the Roman empire, the priests and monks looked with even a stronger interest than the old scholars had felt upon this early translation of so important a portion of the Sacred Scriptures. They made new copies for abbeys, monasteries and colleges; and when the art of printing was discovered, this book was one of the first on which the powers of typography were tried.

The work of the seventy-two scribes has long since perished, but not the power they set in motion. No ancient copies of the Septuagint remain; but the Word of the Lord endureth forever, and hundreds of thousands of copies of the Holy Bible now take the place of the few carefully-guarded Hebrew writings which roused the ambitious energy of Egypt's monarch over two thousand years ago. ELLA RODMAN CHURCH.

TRIFLES.

O H, dare not call them trifles
Unworthy of regard;
Do not despise the pebbles
That travelers' steps retard.
The lofty mount, the tow'ring rock,
The frowning precipice,
Cause not so many tired feet,
Make not delay like these.

Did rocks rise boldly in our path,
Deep chasms stretch before,
We'd scale the one, the other cross,
And reach green fields once more.
But walking, every moment
Exposed to sudden pain
From thorns or pebbles deftly hid,
We arm ourselves in vain.

What wonder that the heart grows sick
While wearily, in pain,
We fight our fight with trifles
That but attack again.
When least alarmed, when all unarmed,
When free from doubts and fears,
With sudden, overpowering force
We feel their sharpened spears.

Talk not of heroes' battles then,
Or victors' laurels won,
If only foemen brave have faced,
The conflict's but begun.
But when the trifling trials
Are met with spirits calm,
Silently met and conquered,
Then yield the victor's palm.

RUBY ROSS.

THE TREASURE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF E. SOUVESTRE.

A YOUNG girl and an old man were seated in a small room, the furniture of which was exceedingly poor but carefully kept, showing the efforts of a poverty which yet did not despair. Order, taste and neatness gave to the poor room a sort of elegance. Every object was in its place, the bricks of the floor were washed with care, the faded hangings were free from stain and the window was trimmed with little curtains of coarse muslin upon which numerous darnings formed a kind of embroidery. A few pots of common flowers outside the half-open window perfumed the air with their sweet odors.

The sun was setting; a purple light illuminated the humble dwelling, touching the pretty face of the young girl and sporting in the white hair of the old man. The old soldier (for such he was), was seated in a rush-bottomed arm-chair, which industrious solicitude had furnished with cushions stuffed with tow and covered with odd pieces of calico. An old foot-stove used as a stool sustained his maimed feet, and the only arm which remained to him, rested upon a small table where lay a meerschaum and an embroidered tobacco-pouch. He had one of those faces wrinkled and bold, in which frankness tempers the harshness. A gray mustache hid the slight smile which played upon his lips while his eyes rested upon the young girl.

She was about twenty years old; a brunette with mobile features where the feelings showed themselves in rapid changes. Her face resembled a clear stream which allows us to see the treasures of its pebbly bottom. She held a newspaper, from which she was reading to the old soldier. Suddenly she stopped and listened to some sound.

"What is it?" demanded the old man.

"Nothing," replied the girl, whose face expressed disappointment.

"You thought you heard Charles," said the soldier.

"That is true," said the girl, blushing a little; "his day's work should be finished, and it is the hour when he returns."

"When he returns," repeated Vincent, with a tone of vexation.

Suzanne opened her lips to justify her cousin; but her judgment, without doubt, protested against this intention, for she stopped embarrassed, and then fell into a reverie.

The old soldier passed the hand which remained to him over his mustache and commenced to twist it impatiently.

"Our conscript plays a bad march," said he at last; "he leaves his work to run to the public houses and the *fêtes* and returns home in an ill-humor; all that will end badly for him and for us."

"Do not say that, my uncle, you will bring him bad luck," replied the young girl, in a grieved tone. "This is a bad time, but I hope. For some time my cousin has had notions. He has no longer the courage to work."

"And why not?"

"Because he says he has nothing to hope for. He believes that all his efforts for the future are useless, and thinks that it is best to live from day to day without care and without hope."

"Ah! Is that his plan?" replied the old man, frowning. "Ah, well, he has not the honor of having invented it. We had also in our regiment such logicians, who excused themselves from leaving the camp, under the pretext that the route was too long, and who lagged in the depots while their companions entered Madrid, Berlin and Vienna. Thy cousin knows not that by means of putting one foot before the other, the shortest legs can make the journey to Rome."

"Ah! if you could make him comprehend that!" said Suzanne, with fervor. "I have tried faithfully to convert him, by counting how much a good workman like him could save; but when I arrive at the sum, he shrugs his shoulders and says that women know nothing about accounts."

"And then you despair, poor child," continued Vincent, with a tender smile; "I see now why thou hast so often red eyes."

"My uncle, I assure you—"

"I see what makes thee forget to water thy flowers and why I hear thee sing no more."

"My uncle—"

Suzanne, confused, lowered her eyes and rolled up the corner of the paper. Vincent laid his hand upon her head.

"Does she think that I am going to scold her?" said he, in a tone, brusque, yet kind. "Is it not perfectly natural that you should be interested in Charles who is your cousin, and who one day I hope—"

The young girl made a movement.

"Well! we will not speak of that; I always forget that with you young girls it is necessary to be ignorant of what one knows. We will speak no more of it, I promise you; let us return to this worthless fellow for whom thou hast a friendship—that is the proper word, is it not—and who has also a friendship for thee."

Suzanne shook her head.

"That is, he had at one time," said she; "but since some time. If you knew how cold he is! How much he has the air of being tired of all things."

"Yes," replied Vincent, thoughtfully, "when one has tasted the amusements of the great world, the pleasures of the household appear insipid; we know all about that, my girl; many of us have passed through that."

"But they have been cured," observed Suzanne;

"so may Charles be cured. It will be sufficient, perhaps, that you should speak to him, my uncle."

The old man made a gesture of incredulity.

"Such infirmities cannot be cured by words," replied he, "but by deeds; one cannot easily find a wiser man than a good soldier; he has experience, gained through fatigue and the baptism of fire. Thy cousin, see you, lacks the will, because he cannot see the goal. It will be necessary to show such a goal as will restore his courage; but that is not an easy matter—I will think of it."

"There! That is surely he now," interrupted the young girl, who had recognized the quick step of her cousin upon the stairs.

"Then silence in the ranks!" said the old soldier. "Let us not have an air thinking of anything special, and take up your reading."

Suzanne obeyed, but the trembling of her voice would have quickly revealed her emotion to an attentive observer. While her eyes followed the printed lines and her mouth pronounced the words mechanically, her ear and her thought were entirely on her cousin who had just opened the door and deposited his cap upon the table in the middle of the room.

Taking the reading as an excuse for silence, the young workman saluted neither his uncle nor his cousin, but approaching the window leaned against it with folded arms.

Suzanne continued to read without comprehending what she was saying. She was in that mosaic of news separated and often contradictory, which is grouped under the common title of "*various facts*." Charles, who had at first appeared inattentive, at last seemed to listen as if in spite of himself. After several announcements of robberies, fires and accidents, the young girl came to the following article:

"A poor peddler of Besançon, named Pierre Lefèvee, wishing at any sacrifice to make a fortune, conceived the idea of going to India, which he had heard was the country for gold and diamonds. He sold the little he possessed, reached Bordeaux and embarked in the capacity of under cook in an American vessel. Eighteen years rolled by, during which time no one had heard of Pierre Lefèvee. At last his relatives received a letter announcing that he would return shortly; the letter also stated that the ex-peddler, after unutterable fatigue and strange vicissitudes, would arrive in France blind of an eye and maimed of an arm, but the possessor of a fortune valued at two millions."

Charles, who had listened to the article with an increasing attention, could not resist an exclamation.

"Two millions!" repeated he, with surprise.

"That will be sufficient to buy him a glass-eye and a false arm," said the old soldier, ironically.

"See the good luck!" said Charles, who had not listened to the reflection of his uncle.

"And that he has not done with comfort to himself," added Vincent.

"Eighteen years of unutterable fatigue," repeated Suzanne, confirming him with the expressions of the paper.

"What of that, when he has a fortune in the end?" replied Charles, with quickness. "The difficulty is neither in undertaking a bad route nor in enduring hardships to reach a good shelter, but in marching to arrive nowhere."

"Then," replied the young girl, whose eyes were raised timidly to her cousin, "then you envy the fate of the peddler: you would give all your years of youth, one of your eyes, one of your hands—"

"For two millions," interrupted Charles, "certainly! You have only to find me a buyer at that price, Suzanne, and I will assure you a dot for pin-money."

The young girl turned away her head without replying; her heart was grieved, and tears glistened in her eyes. Vincent was equally silent, but he commenced again to twist his mustache with a morose air.

There was a long silence; each of the three actors in the scene was occupied with his own thoughts. The noise of the clock which struck eight, recalled Suzanne. She raised her head quickly and commenced to set the table for the evening repast.

The meal was sad and short. Charles, who had passed the latter part of the day with his friends at the public house, had no wish for food, and Suzanne had lost her appetite. Vincent alone did honor to the frugal supper, for the trials of a soldier's life had accustomed his stomach to maintain its rights under all circumstances, but he was quickly satisfied, and returned to his arm-chair near the window.

After the room was put in order, Suzanne, who wished to be alone, took up a candle, embraced her uncle and retired to the small room above, which she occupied. Vincent and the young workman found themselves *tête-à-tête*.

Charles rose to bid his uncle good-evening, when the old soldier made him a sign to draw the bolt of the door and come nearer.

"I have something to tell you," said he, seriously.

Charles, who expected reproaches, remained standing before the old man, but Vincent made him a sign to be seated.

"Have you thought well of the words which you spoke just now?" said he, regarding his nephew fixedly. "Would you really be capable of making a long effort to obtain a fortune?"

"Can you doubt it, my uncle?" replied Charles, surprised at the question.

"Then you would consent to have patience to work without stopping and to change your present habits?"

"If it would profit me anything. But why do you ask me such questions?"

"I am going to tell you," said the old soldier, who opened a drawer in a little bureau, in which he kept the old newspapers taken by one of the lodgers.

He searched for some time among the printed leaves, finally selecting one, he opened it and showed Charles an article which he marked with his finger-nail. The young workman read it in a low voice.

"Some advances had just been made to the Spanish government upon the subject of a deposit hid in the ground, upon the bank of the Duero, after the battle of Salamanca. It appeared that during that famous retreat, a company, belonging to the first division, and which was charged with the care of several caissons, was separated from the body of the army by a detachment of soldiers so much superior, that all efforts at resistance were useless. The officer who commanded it, seeing that there was no hope of making way through the enemy, took advantage of the night to bury the caissons, with the help of some of the soldiers in whom he had the most confidence; then, sure that no one would be able to discover the hidden caissons, he ordered his little troop to disperse, in order that they might attempt to escape separately through the lines of the enemy. Some of them succeeded in regaining the division; but the officer and the men who knew the place where the caissons had been buried all perished in the flight. We are assured that the caissons contained all the money belonging to the army, that is to say a sum of nearly three millions."

Charles stopped and looked at the old soldier with sparkling eyes.

"Were you a part of that company?" cried he.

"I was a part of it," replied Vincent.

"You know the place of that deposit?"

"I was one of those whom the captain sent to make the deposit, and the only one of them who escaped the balls of the enemy."

"Then you could give the indications and assist in finding it?" replied Charles, quickly.

"The more easily that the captain made us take a line by two hills and a rock, in order that we might be able to recognize the place at a future time."

Charles bounded from his seat.

"Then your fortune is made," cried he, with animation. "Why have you not told this? The French government would have accepted any propositions from you."

"Perhaps," said Vincent; "but any way it would have been useless."

"Why?"

"Spain has refused to give the permission already solicited. Thou wilt see."

He handed the young man a second journal, which indeed announced that a demand relating to the search for the deposit hidden by the French in 1812 upon the border of the Duero had been rejected by the government of Madrid.

"But what need of permission?" objected Charles. "What necessity is there to make a search officially when it can be done without noise? Once upon the place, and the land bought, who could hinder one from digging it up?—who would suspect the discovery?"

"I have thought of that many times this thirty years," replied the soldier; "but where can the sum necessary for the journey and the purchase be obtained?"

"Can you not apply to some rich man and tell him the secret?"

"But what means of making him believe it, or of preventing him from abusing our confidence in case he should believe us? Or if chance should hinder our success? It might happen, as in the fable which you read the other day to your cousin, that, in sharing, the lion should keep all the prey. To what good then, tell me, would all be? For the few years which remain to me, it is not worth while to take so much trouble. The deuce take the millions which I must go after. I have two hundred francs pension for daily rations and tobacco. I care for any more as little as I care for a body of Cossacks."

"Then you will let this occasion escape you?" replied Charles, with a feverish excitement.

"You will refuse wealth?"

"For myself, certainly," replied the old man; "but for you it is another thing. I see that you are ambitious; that nothing would be troublesome to you that would take you into the company of the millionaires. Ah, well, pick up the sum necessary for the journey and I will share with you."

"Is it possible? Will you?"

"Gain two thousand francs; at that price I will give thee a treasure. Will that do?"

"That is splendid, uncle!" cried Charles, with much excitement. Then, recollecting himself, he added, in a sad tone: "But how to collect so much money! I shall never be able to do it."

"Work with courage, and bring me thy wages regularly each week, and I promise thee success."

"Think, my uncle, that the savings of a workman are trifling."

"That is my business."

"How many years will it take?"

"You have just now offered eighteen years, with an eye and an arm in addition."

"Ah, if I was sure!"

"Of acquiring a treasure? I swear it to you by the ashes of the little corporal."

That was the old soldier's strongest oath. Charles was forced to consider the offer as being serious. Vincent encouraged him again, repeating that he had his future in his own hands, and the young man went to bed resolved to use his utmost effort.

But the secret which his uncle had confided to him had awakened such great hopes that he could not sleep. He passed the night in a sort of fever, calculating the means of soonest gaining the necessary sum, considering how he should employ his future wealth, and going through, one after another, as if they were realities, all the chimeras of which he took pleasure in dreaming.

When Suzanne came down the next morning, he had already gone out to his work. Vincent, seeing her astonishment, nodded his head and smiled, but said nothing; he had recommended secrecy to the young workman, and he intended to keep the secret himself. Besides, it was best to see if Charles would persevere in his new resolutions.

The first months were the hardest. The young bookbinder had formed habits which were difficult to break; continuous work was insupportable to him. He was obliged to renounce the capriciousness which heretofore had been his only rule of action, to surmount fatigue and disgust, and to resist the importunities of his old comrades. All this was at first an arduous task; many times his courage failed, and he was upon the point of falling into his old dissipations; but the importance of the end to be obtained reanimated him. He brought his wages home to the old soldier, and as the sum augmented from week to week, he felt always a renewed hope which strengthened his courage; it was a very small step toward the end, but still a step.

Moreover, each day the effort became easier. Man resembles a vessel, of which the sails are the passions; turn them to the winds of the world, and the man is carried around by all the currents, and thrown on all the reefs; but set the sails with good sense, and navigation will become less dangerous; throw the anchor of habit in the chosen place, and there will be nothing more to fear.

Thus it happened to the young workman. According as his life became more regular, his tastes took a new direction. The assiduity with which he worked all day, rendered his sleep sweet; abandoning his noisy companions gave a new charm to his uncle and his cousin. The latter had renewed her kind familiarity. Employing herself only for Vincent and Charles, she succeeded in transforming each meeting into a *fête*. Each day some new surprise, some charming attention, bound up their affection with bands of joy and tenderness. Charles was much astonished to find in his cousin qualities and graces which he had never remarked before. She became insensi-

bly more necessary to him. Unawares, the aim of his life changed; the hope of the treasure promised by Vincent was no longer his sole motive power; in each action he thought, he wished to merit her approbation, to become more dear to her. The human mind is a kind of moral daguerreotype; surround it with images of order, courage and devotion, illuminate it with the sun of tenderness, each image will print itself and remain forever fixed.

The life which Charles was leading extinguished, little by little, his fierce ambition; he saw the simple happiness which was nearest to him; his paradise was no longer a fairy land of the Arabian Nights, but a little place filled with those he loved. All this, however, took place almost unknown to him. The young workman let himself drift in the current of his nature without studying if each wave carried him backward or forward. His transformation, visible to those who lived with him, was unknown to himself; he recognized no change, only that he felt more tranquil and happy. The only novelty that he perceived in his feelings was his love for Suzanne; she began to be mixed in all his projects, and he could see his life only with her.

This element of happiness modified all his wishes of the future. The millions of money, instead of being the principal object, were now only means to an end; he regarded them as an important addition to his hopes, but only as accessories. His greatest wish was to know if his love was returned.

He was walking one evening up and down the little room, while Vincent and Suzanne were talking together by the stove. They were talking of Charles's master, who, after thirty years of laborious and honest work, intended to sell out his business, and retire with his wife into the country.

"There is a couple who know how to have paradise upon earth," said the old soldier; "always agreeing, always in good humor, always at work."

"Yes," replied Suzanne, "the richest might envy their lot."

Charles stopped suddenly in front of the young girl.

"Do you wish that your husband should love you as much, Suzanne?" demanded he, looking at her.

"Yes, certainly—if that can be," replied the young girl, smiling and blushing a little.

"It can be," replied Charles, quickly, "and for that you have only to say a word."

"What word, my cousin?" said Suzanne, stammering.

"Consent to become my wife." And as he saw her surprise and confusion, he added: "Do not let that trouble you, Suzanne. I have wished for a long time to ask you that question; I have been waiting for a reason, which my uncle knows; but you see my heart has spoken in spite of myself."

And now be as frank as I am. Hide nothing of what you feel; our uncle there listens to us, and he will chide us if we say anything wrong."

The young man drew near his cousin and pressed her hand in his; his voice trembled, his eyes were wet with unshed tears. Suzanne remained trembling with downcast face, and the old soldier looked at them both with a smile partly affectionate and partly bantering.

At last he pushed the young girl gently toward Charles, saying gayly: "Go speak, cunning little one."

"Suzanne, one word, only one word, pray," resumed Charles, who still held his cousin's hand. "Will you accept me for your husband?"

She hid her face upon his shoulder with an inarticulate "Yes."

"Ah, well then!" cried Vincent, striking his knees. "But that *yes* was hard to get out. Your hands, and let somebody hug me. I leave you this evening for yourselves, to-morrow we will talk of business."

The next day he took his nephew aside and informed him that the sum necessary for their voyage was complete, and that they could now set out for Spain whenever they wished.

This news, which should have delighted Charles, caused him instead a grievous shock. He must then leave Suzanne at the very moment when they were commencing to exchange expressions of their love; run all the chances of a long and troublesome journey, when it would be so pleasant to remain. He almost cursed the millions that he must go so far to find. Since the interest of his life had changed, his desire for riches seemed quenched. What need now of so much gold to buy happiness? He had already found true joy.

However, he said nothing to his uncle, but declared that he was ready to go.

The old soldier charged himself with the preparations; and for that purpose he went out several successive days, accompanied by Suzanne. At last he announced to Charles that nothing remained but to take their places. During the absence of the young girl one day, he desired his nephew to follow him for this object, and as the fatigue experienced the last few days had rendered his wounds painful, he took a hackney coach.

Vincent had taken care to procure beforehand the newspapers which had mentioned the famous deposit made upon the border of the Duero; when he found himself alone with Charles, he handed him the papers, and asked him to examine them, and ascertain if they contained any information which would be of use to them.

The young man read over first the details which he already knew, then the announcement of the refusal of the Spanish government, and finally an account of fruitless researches by some merchants of Barcelona. He thought he had read all the

documents, when his eyes fell upon a letter signed Pierre Dufour.

"Pierre Dufour," repeated Vincent; "that was the name of the quarter-master of the company."

"That is indeed the title that he takes," replied Charles.

"God be thanked; I believed the brave *garçon* was in the other world. Let us see what he says; he was the confidant of the captain."

Instead of answering, Charles cried out. He had just run through the letter, and a change came over his face.

"Well, what is there, then?" tranquilly demanded Vincent.

"What is there!" repeated the young man.

"There is what, if this Dufour speaks true, makes the voyage useless."

"Why?"

"Because the caissons were not filled with money, but powder."

Vincent looked at his nephew, and burst out laughing.

"Ah, it was powder!" cried he; "that is the reason why, before they were buried, the men discharged the cartridges."

"You knew about it?"

"Since I saw it," replied the old man, good-naturedly.

"But, then, you have deceived me," cried the young man; "you did not believe in the existence of the millions hid in the ground, and your promise was a jest."

"That is a truth," replied the soldier, seriously.

"I promised thee a treasure, and thou shalt have it, only we will not go to Spain to look for it."

"What do you mean?"

"Thou shalt know."

The coach stopped before a shop; the two travelers descended and entered the shop. Charles recognized the workshop of his former master, but repaired, painted and furnished with all the necessary tools. He was just going to ask an explanation of what he saw, when his eyes fell upon the name of the proprietor above the counter in gold letters; it was his own name! At the same instant the door back of the shop opened; he perceived a fire burning brightly, a table set, and Suzanne, who, smiling, made a sign to him to enter.

Vincent leaned toward him, and, seizing his hand, said: "Behold the treasure that I have promised thee—a good business which will give thee a living, and a good wife who will make thee happy. All which thou seest here has been gained by thee and belongs to thee. Do not trouble thyself that I have deceived thee. Thou didst not wish to drink happiness, and I did as nurses do who rub the cup with honey when the child pushes it away. Now that thou knowest in what a happy life consists, and hast tasted it, I hope thou wilt no longer refuse it.

M. S. PRESTON.

SOME AILMENTS INCIDENTAL TO OLD AGE.

A GREEN, or, as some call it, a "hearty" old age, is what we all hope to live to, if we hope to live to be old at all. Whether we do so or not depends greatly upon how we use ourselves in the days of our youth and prime of manhood. But, contrary to what the poet says, I hold that it is not at all necessary for the aged to have, as a rule, "weary days and nights of sleepless pain." No, nor for the old to wish youth to come again. There is a land where youth blooms eternal; let us rather look forward than backward. There is no greater blessing that can be enjoyed in old age than that of contentment. In the case of the aged, contentment really is a continual feast. It is a habit, therefore, that ought to be cultivated, if only for these two reasons: first, that fretfulness aggravates any ailment or chronic disease one may be suffering from—owing to the effect the mind has over the body; and, secondly, that a fretful man (or woman) is less likely to be loved by those around him, upon whom he is really dependent for the comforts of his daily life; for let him be as rich as Ctesus, and able to command all the luxuries life can give, I think it is better to deserve than command, and better to be loved for one's self than toadied to for one's wealth.

It is not at all necessary that age should always ache, and by proper precautions many ailments incidental to old people may be warded off, and nearly all that have been acquired may be mitigated if not entirely cured.

The disease known by medical men as senile bronchitis comes uppermost to my mind; it is little less than a bad cough, with copious expectoration of frothy phlegm and matter. It is usually easiest in summer and on fine sunny days, and worst in winter and dark, gloomy weather. In other words, the secretion is diminished by life in the warmth of the sun, and increased by cold; diminished by the exhilaration of spirits caused by a fine day, and increased by the gloom of a dull one, and this latter is simply a proof of what I said just now about fretfulness always aggravating any present disorder. Take a case in point: an old man who, verging on eighty, has always been used to an active out-of-door life, and, although suffering from severe senile bronchitis, still takes walks abroad every fine forenoon, is confined to the house on a rainy day; he will still take his exercise up and down the room, pausing oft to gaze longingly through the windows, and wondering, while he bemoans his hard fate, if it ever means to clear up. This very worry of mind then increases both cough and expectoration; he at once thinks he is "booked" for another world. "Bless my heart," he will say to his wife, "did ever you see the like? Did you ever in your born

days hear such a cough? Ah, my dear, you won't have me long now!"

But presently the sun "blinks" out. He brightens up, forgets his cough, and lays aside the cordial mixture—both objects of untiring interest to him all this forenoon.

"I'll take my stick," he says, "and run down and see how poor old so-and-so is to-day."

He goes out, and a couple of hours after he returns humming a tune, looking, aye, and feeling just twenty years younger, and his very first question to his wife is: "Dinner ready yet, my dear?"

This is no imaginary sketch, and I could give you fifty, nay, a hundred like it.

On the other hand, do you not think with me that the following case is also instructive? Old John W. W—, not so old either, having only just seen the allotted span, spends a small fortune over physic, and the whole of every day in his huge arm-chair, all too close to the fire. He coughs a deal, groans and grumbles a deal more, is always sure he won't live many hours, but generally manages to pull through somehow. Wouldn't have the window open an inch, though I know it would do him a yard of good; says he couldn't walk half a mile to save his life, though I know he could run the distance with the same end in view. His wife and daughter are kind to him, and dread him a little; his grandchildren fear him, and I should require the inducement of a bigger fee than he has ever yet paid me, to remain longer at a time in his bed-room than five minutes, so stuffy is it. Now, do you not think with me that he is not only guilty of making himself and every one around him wretched, but also of shortening his days? To speak kindly to the aged, to be ever patient with them, and to listen with some degree of attention to their whims are sacred duties that the medical practitioner has to perform, yet one cannot help at times being cross with a case like this.

Well, I fear that to many the symptoms of senile bronchitis, or the catarrh of old people, are too well-known to need description; and those who so suffer will do well to take good care of themselves, without over-doing it. The exercise should be moderate—that is, never carried to the verge of fatigue; at the same time it is no reason, on a fine day, why a patient should come to the house at once, when he feels a little tired; let him take heart of grace and rest for a short time in a sunny corner, out of the draught, then continue the walk.

Elderly people are often subject to apoplexy especially such as live too freely, or who are subject to fits of rage and excitement. Such people should never overload the stomach, should sleep in a well-ventilated room and bathe the head well in cold water every morning. If there is occasional

giddiness it may arise from too much blood, and indicate purging and spare diet; but if the person himself is of spare habit the giddiness calls aloud for good food, an iron tonic and draughts of milk fresh from the cow in all cases where the stomach can stand them. All that friends can do when an attack comes on is to send for the doctor speedily, put the patient in a well-ventilated room, in a reclining-chair, with the head well back, apply cold water to the head, and place the legs in hot water with a handful of mustard in it.

Sleeplessness is a common concomitant of gathering years. I but mention it to warn my readers against the use of sleeping draughts, which do but act artificially and hardly ever fail to ultimately shorten life; pure air, very well-ventilated bedroom, exercise and a light supper, are the only safe narcotics in old age. Old people, by the way, do not need so much sleep as the younger folks, and if they retire early they ought to be up betimes.

I may add in conclusion that the aged, being very sensitive to cold, should wear warm though light clothing, with flannel next the skin—the clothes being loose, not tight; they should have their bed-rooms and bed-clothes well aired, and for the purposes of warmth and ventilation a little bit of fire in the bed-room. The bed-clothes should be soft and warm without being heavy, and the surroundings cheerful in appearance.

RUNNING ASHORE.

[At the investigation into the cause of the burning of the *Seawanhaka*, Captain Smith, when asked what he did after the discovery of the fire, replied, simply: "Oh, I ran her ashore."]

TWAS nothing heroic; just merely a turn
Of the wheel, and a grasp that was steady and firm,
And an eye clear and keen. Yet there rose, for some
cause,
At that simple act, a whole nation's applause.

Captain Smith he was called; and he started that day
With hundreds of passengers, happy and gay;
Sweet melodies floated away on the breeze,
And cares were forgotten with light-hearted ease.

Sad eyes, that had gazed since they opened on life
On naught but distress and continual strife,
With the wolf at the door, 'gan to sparkle with mirth,
And joy, it appeared, had bewitched the whole earth.

Old men became gallants; old women coquettes;
Old feuds were forgotten, as well as old debts;
Young hearts by bright eyes beaming love were
entranced,
Till Cupid became so delighted he danced.

The sea smiled in ripples, which merrily chased
Around the brave ship in a frolicsome race.
No clouds to be seen to betoken disaster,
And songs, shouts and laughter rose louder and
faster.

The captain, the meanwhile, stood grasping the
wheel,
And smiled as he heard the loud peal after peal
Of laughter; then thought, as they plowed on their
way,
Of the hundreds of lives in his keeping that day.

Below, where the ship's mighty heart pulsed with life,
The fire-fiends groaned in a desperate strife
To burst the strong, iron-bound walls that confined.
Then woe to the daughters and sons of mankind!

Then laugh, old and young, and rejoice while you
may,
But many, I ween, laughed their last on that day;
For dark and unseen fell the shadow of fate
Upon the stanch ship with its precious soul-freight.

"FIRE! FIRE! *God help us, we're a-fire!*" The yell
Rang out from below like a message from hell.
"Fire! Fire!" Song changed into shriek at the
shout,
And mirth's gleeful frolic to terror's wild rout.

See there! how already shoot up from below
The fierce hissing flames with their blood-crimson
glow!

How they writhe like exultant, fell demons of death
That blast with a touch of their torturing breath.

The captain stood spell-bound at first, when he heard
That cry; the next moment the mighty wheel whirled
As spun by a giant. "God help us to run
Her bow in the shallows! It's all can be done."

Can that? Is there time? With what terrible speed
The flames lick their way in their devilish greed!
"Hello! Can you stand by your posts?" was the cry
To the men down below, and "Ay! Ay! sir, we'll try,"
Came back. "Then full headway. We'll run her
ashore,

God giving us strength, in but four minutes more."
Four minutes! Already he feels the fierce heat
And hears the dry planks crackle close to his feet.

Speed on, noble ship, in thy last dying throes,
For need more imperative never arose.
"One minute is all that is needed," he said,
But the spokes in his hands are like hot, molten lead.

The flames hiss around him in furious rage,
And reach for his life. See, the wheel is ablaze.
One moment—then oh, what a cheer! as they feel
At last, on the bottom, the grate of the keel!

And now, I suppose, you're aware what it was
He did made the nation rise up in applause.
Heroic? Oh, no. Simple duty—no more—
Upheld him that day he just "ran her ashore."

E. J. WHEELER.

THE ANNALS OF A BABY.*

IV.

BABY'S NURSE.

THE Young Mother was in despair; Baby was no light weight, and her heart was heavy; her arms were tired, and her mind was worried; because for nearly two weeks the Young Mother had been Baby's only nurse. Not that all ministrations for her child were not sweet and holy as ever; not that Baby's little body was not more precious than fine gold; but the extra care and fatigue added to her other duties, the confinement to the house, the weariness of an imperative work which required attention to be constantly on the alert and yet left no trace of its exaction, was beginning to tell on her whole nature, of which the flesh was weaker than the willing spirit. For the Young Mother had had sad experiences of helps and hinderances in the shape of Nursemaids; she had come to consider Baby's life as a "brand snatched from the burning" of incompetency and ignorance, and, from the utter carelessness and unmotherliness of those who went about as accomplished handmaids, had almost been inclined to credit the doctrine of total depravity. So that she had grown cautious and particular in her selection of a new girl; and having conceived certain transcendental ideas that at the root of all service to humanity, whether from high or low, there must be Love as an inspirer and instigator of faithful duty, it was not very likely she would very soon find requisite fineness in the Hibernian material that generally applied for the situation, with a much stronger interest in wages and perquisites than in the labor and tenderness which was expected for them.

And if Baby could have spoken in any other language than a coo and a cry, what a tale the small creature could have unfolded of torments manifold and infantile endurance! of the brawny Celt who tossed the tiny form in the air, too frightened to make vocal protest, and who trotted her bony limbs persistently, kneading the sensitive flesh with bumps and bruises, and who vigorously stuck promiscuous pins through the soft raiment without the slightest regard to the position of the points; of the sly, sleek "professioner," who surreptitiously administered paregoric that she might slip away to the pious enjoyment of love-feasts with an admirer who waited at the back gate; of the French *bonne*, whose broken chatter banished sleep, and whose sole idea of infant needs was confined to a perambulator on the most crowded streets; of the middle-aged familiar, whose "sober and honest" character was attested by a private bottle which proved detrimental to her charge to the extent of sundry knocks and falls; and of the half-grown assistance who ate up all the pap, and proclaimed aloud that "Baby was wisely swellin' with too much stuffin'."

It seemed as if through the very innocence and helplessness of her Baby the Young Mother had first learned the moral destitution, the lack of all sense of responsibility which leavens so much human nature with wickedness and vice; it made her heart-sick sometimes to feel her trust in her

fellow-creatures so rudely disturbed, and to comprehend how much the lower strata of people required educating and elevating; yet, as she knew from her own experience that men and women were not all alike, and that the world held sweetest and best as well as warped and worst, so she kept also her faith that even in the hardest and basest there was something, if it could be got at, by which each might be lifted to a higher level; and as she pondered these things often in the pure charity of her soul, she had the strong longing of impressive spirits to instruct and uplift the ignorant and the evil; only in these individual cases her own environment proved too strong for her, and Baby's life, health and comfort were too dear and too important to afford time and patience for experiment. So, with her instincts sharpened by fresh knowledge and maternal anxiety, she watched and waited for another servitor in whom feeling and fidelity should equal self-interest, and control the enmity cultivated toward employers. She grew, too, to understand that if her overflowing mother's love was not proof against the monotony and weariness of care-taking, it could hardly be considered an unmitigated privilege by a stranger to have the constant guardianship of the most angelic baby that ever breathed; and a great compassion fell upon her for those to whom labor, unlightened by affection, is a necessity and a grievance.

So day after day went by, and as one after another candidate for the place was rejected, the sympathetic Grandmothers, who had hopefully haunted Intelligence Offices, began to think she was too hard to suit, and were inclined to leave her to her own devices at last in the search. The hearty Grandfathers told her she was getting thin and pale with her impracticable fancies, and that she had better put up with any Bridget that came along, rather than wear out her youth and beauty in a hunt for the undiscoverable; and even the Young Husband gently reproved her for supposing she could ever receive heart-work for hire. The Young Aunties fluttered in, turn about, with sisterly desire to help and relieve; they each chirped and played a little while with delighted Baby, like the veriest bright and happy children, and while the novelty lasted Baby responded to their enthusiasm and entertainment with all gladness and gayety that called forth an unfailing ingenuity of pet names. But when Baby's attention was no longer to be cajoled with caressing tones or tapping on the window-panes; when it came to the uninteresting task of holding for any length of time a growing and unmindful weight; when there were unaccountable wails to be soothed, and distracting screams to be pacified or explained, then the Young Aunties felt that they had mistaken their vocation, and looked so forlorn and tired, and tried so hard to be patient, that the Young Mother always made some excuse to release them, and contrived to send them home without having their confidence entirely shaken in Baby's perfections. But the Poor Relation came in occasionally when she could spare time, and gladly gave the Young Mother some little comfortable rest, while Baby nestled contentedly in the willing arms that never wearied of well-doing, and who, while she thus eased another's burden, forgot her own awhile, as, looking into the tiny face, she dreamed many a dream of the might have been.

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It was now one of those rare and lovely days, when summer, lingering long through the autumn, brings all that she can of light, and heat, and color to crown her ensuing departure; when the warmth was like early June, and the sky a July heaven, while through all the air was a soft and scarcely perceptible haze which sheds upon the October world that indescribable pensiveness which is not sadness, and yet which tempers joy. And to indulge in this last spell of the season's sweetness, the Young Mother had brought Baby to the open parlor window, who looked out in serene quietude at opposite trees and passing sights. There was a solemn stillness in the atmosphere, such as sometimes comes with the changing of the leaves, as if nature waited in sweet expectancy of crimson and gold for the coming silence of the snows or the gathering storms of winter, and the whole circumstance of time and conditions touched and filled the gentle heart with yearning without pain which lies among those deep things of God which brings the divine into human life. As she sat there, holding her Baby in her arms, a woman came slowly along on the other side and paused before the window—a woman, haggard, jaded, dust-stained; young in years as the Young Mother, but with the flowers of youth withered on the pale cheeks and pallid mouth. An image of desolate dejection, she had moved on till Baby's face caught her aimless sight, and wild light flashed into her dreary eyes; she tossed up her arms and stood still, looking over with such hungry, wistful gaze as made her whole pitiful figure almost pathetic; then, as if involuntarily drawn by an irresistible attraction, she crossed the street and came close to the house. The Young Mother shrank just a little, for at the first moment she thought the poor creature was insane; but her innate delicacy prevented her from showing fear or aversion, and the mood of the day and season was still upon her; besides, such a thin, thin hand was laid upon the sill, and such a wan eager countenance was lifted to her own, that her compassion welled up into words.

"What is it?" she said, with such womanly sympathy in her voice that it was like balm to the wounded. "Are you sick, or in want? Can I help you?"

And the woman gave a short, gasping sob, and stretched out her hands to her. "Only let me kiss your baby!" she cried.

The Young Mother naturally hesitated, but the woman went on: "Oh, it is so long since I have seen a baby! Ah, madam! you are good, you are happy; you don't know sorrow; you don't know sin; you don't know what it is to have lost your baby and to go about the world with empty arms and despairing heart. Mine is gone—gone! but it seems to me if a baby's pure lips could but touch mine again, I would be more fit to die!"

With an intuition like an inspiration the Young Mother saw that this being had wronged her own womanhood, and had suffered through her motherhood; that the sin and the suffering had been too great for her to bear, and that she was about to take her life to end it all. An exceeding pity flashed the tears into her eyes; the sin shocked her, but the evident suffering and punishment atoned. She could not send away, perhaps to her death, another fellow-creature, if a word or deed of hers might stay her; a woman, poor, wan and

distressed, who wanted nothing but a baby's kiss, was surely worth saving; a woman who grieved for a dead baby must have that in her that a little child could lead; and perhaps the dear Father in Heaven had sent this fallen sister to her Baby for redemption! She paused a little space as these thoughts filled her mind—paused, looking down into the sad face, over which there gradually rose a deep flush of shame as the silence was misinterpreted into scorn; then the worn figure turned to go away with a fresh bitterness gathering in the heart. But the Young Mother leaned forward, and laid a hand on her shoulder. "Wait!" she said, and rose up from the window. She went to the door with her baby on her breast, passed down the steps, took the thin hand in her own, and led the surprised woman into the house—into the house and up-stairs to her own chamber, placed her in her own low chair, and laid the Baby in her arms. Bewildered by this unexpected kindness, the woman sat silent; but when the soiled bonnet was gently removed, and a soft touch smoothed her hair, she looked up into the sweet face bending over her, and beheld there such a loving sympathy, that all the flood-gates were opened, and she lifted up her heart and wept—wept as the Young Mother had never seen any one weep before, with the speechless agony of an overcharged spirit, till at last the other, in the fullness of compassion, put her arms about her and rested the drooping head upon her pure bosom; and after awhile, when there came a peace after the tempest of tears, she brought food and water, that cleansing and refreshing might give strength and comfort; and when her strange guest thanked her in broken tones, she said, tenderly as one would touch a bleeding sore: "Would you mind telling me your story? Maybe it will give me some idea of how I can help you."

The woman wrung her hands. "Ah! you have been so good, so good!" she cried. "Let me go! let me go! There is no help for such as I! There is nothing left, nothing, but to get out of the world! You have held my head upon your breast, you have put your clean arms about me, you have given your Baby into mine! That is enough! You might be sorry, if you knew all about me, that you ever touched or spoke to me! Oh, let me go!"

But the Young Mother held her, and pleaded with her, and bade her believe that her heart was not a stone; that because of their mutual womanhood and motherhood she could not let her go forth again without some effort to do her good; that they were alone there with God and each other, and she might speak freely, if thereby might come healing to her; that she must not think of judgment and condemnation, but only that she was bringing her sorrow to a sister and a friend. Then the woman wept again, but tenderness prevailed, and after a little she told all her miserable tale—told it with tears and terrible effort—told it with unaffected earnestness and simple pathos—told it as one only tells a heart-history in the supreme crisis of an unhappy life.

She was left an orphan when too young to remember her parents, and had been taken in charge by some distant relatives who owned a large and lucrative farm. They were cold, selfish, puritanical people, with too much pride to let one of their own blood go to the poor-house—whose sole idea

of child-training was filling the stomach and clothing the back, and who were only kind because they had no provocation to be otherwise, for this child grew to be sufficiently useful to earn all she received. She had been educated at the country school, where, having absorbed all there was to teach, she had learned, among other acquirements to keep accounts and sew beautifully; so that she willingly acted as clerk and seamstress, and took her share in the lighter labors of her home. She looked after and loved the dumb creatures, with a friendliness the greater that she had not many human interests. The cows and horses knew her, the sheep came at her call, the poultry clustered round her and the pigeons lighted on her shoulders; she made hay in the fields, picked wild flowers in the woods, berries by the brook-side. Even her duties were light to her, because youth and health sets a glad heart singing at even the heaviest work; and altogether she lived a peaceful, happy, idyllic life, till womanhood imperceptibly dawned on her, ignorant as a little child about everything except her own experience, and scarcely conscious that there was any larger world beyond the limits of the farm.

Then came a day when one was thrown from his horse in a roadside near by, and with much hurt carried into the house, to be laid down for weeks of weariness and pain; he was left pretty much to her care and attendance, for the elder people had too much to do—little patience with the delicate requirement of sickness and refinement. Then came the long, bright summer hours of convalescence, when, with books brought from the city, he opened up a new world to the young girl sitting at his feet, with upraised face all aglow, drinking in the poetry of love and the poison of unconscious passion. The young simplicity, the unworlly trust, the tender face were fair and sweet to the ennuied man of the world, and to the fickle sense gave the new attraction of change from familiar interests. And so, not being entirely a fiend, without perhaps intending evil, he won the unreasoning worship of an unconventional heart; while her careless guardians noticed nothing, considering her still a child, after the fashion of those who do not realize the growing years in others, and have no particular intuition of affection to guide them to the truth.

At last the days and hours of his stay were numbered; time and occasion stirred the man's uncontrolled blood. Cunning words were spoken; practiced eloquence bewitched; vows and promises were made—and how was this inexperienced girl to know the true from the false? All the centred and innate love, which had hitherto found so little response, was poured out like water from a pure fount. And she was so innocent—so innocent and untaught, and felt only that Love was sacred, and conceived of no evil that could come of it; cared only that she was his—his, body and soul, and rejoiced that she had all her life before her to think of and adore him. Only the bitter pain of parting stabbed her happy dream, and the days grew suddenly long and lonely, weighed upon her waiting spirit, buoyed up also with the sure hope that he would come again. She thought it was his continued absence, her morning expectation and nightly disappointment, the yearning wonder of unbroken trust that no word ever came to her, which made her step so heavy, her face so wan

and her work so tiresome and distasteful. She was so innocent—so innocent and ignorant that she comprehended neither her physical suffering, or even that she had sinned. Some interior sense—not shame, but surprise and uneasiness—made her hide herself from curious looks and significant glances, until, in her very innocence and ignorance, feeling as if life was slipping away from her, and that she could not, must not die till he came to her again, she must needs ask relief from her pain. Then was opened upon her the torrent of questions and reproach, scorn and knowledge, and thus she learned that she had sinned and fallen, and was no more fit to dwell with the virtuous and right-minded. Confused and crushed, maddened by jibe and curse, she fled away to the great city where he lived, to search for him there, and find love, and rest, and justice. She had little money and no friends, so she managed to get enough needlework from the stores to give her sustenance while she walked the streets week after week, looking into the faces of the passers-by, always watching, always searching, for she knew naught of him but his name—and in a large metropolis what is one man in the myriad of rushing throngs? Up and down, back and forth, night and day, in sunshine and in rain, in frost and snow she went, with her wistful eyes and sinking soul; always watching, always searching; keeping hope alive with his remembered words; clinging still to her faith in him, because she yet knew so little of the world and humanity. Up and down, back and forth, after nights of tears and through days of anguish, in cold, and hunger, and bodily torment, till nature could hold out no more, and she fell fainting by the way, to be picked up as a cumberer of the streets and sent to one of those hospitals with which charity sanctifies the worst Babylon. Here her baby was born, and upon the darkness of her despairing desolation there fell the solemn and awful sweetness of a mother's love, that mighty and instinctive gush of tenderness with which a woman envelops the one thing which is indeed her very own.

But she would not linger, even for her child's sake; and with her infant in her arms, she sought work, and again commenced her weary search. Sometimes, when rare opportunity occurred, she asked for him; but as she came in contact with none of his order, she received no information; and once again she haunted the streets, always looking for the one face she never saw. But her baby comforted her. Like Correggio's Madonna, she knelt before it worshipping, felt as if an angel dwelt with her; knew herself to be purified and forgiven in the divine eyes by the holiness of her motherhood, and her heart and hope waxed strong in her body weakened by want and exposure. But one day, even more restless than usual with her ever constant waiting, she had gone abroad, up and down, back and forth, watching and searching still, till she came upon a crowd gathered about a church door, looking for a new-made bride to come forth in the splendor of wealth and the glory of beauty; the wedding-bells rang gayly through the clear air; the merry group chatted and jested; the fine carriages blocked up the highway. She stood still, as she did in all such musterings to gaze expectantly on the faces around, never thinking of the couple that the white-robed priest was blessing in the midst of a stately com-

pany—a poor, sad, deserted mother, in a faded dress, with a quiet baby in her arms. There was a stir, an opening of doors, a rush of music, a flashing of diamonds and gleaming of white garments, and then over the pealing of the bells, through the marriage march of the organ, rose a terrible cry of murdered hope, as a stricken woman fell insensible at the bridegroom's feet, and the shrinking bride beheld a pale baby caught up from the folds of her costly lace. Did he know her, after those many months, so changed from the brightness and bloom of happy and glowing girlhood? Did remorse, then and there, strike a sharp fang into his conscience to sting with memory through all eternity? Who knows? He made no sign. He led his wife around the prostrate form, placed her in her carriage with tender and assuring words, turned again and gave money to a by-stander for the unfortunate being who had so unseasonably swooned, and then sank back upon the satin cushions beside his bride, and was whirled away to luxury and ease, honor and high place. And the wedding-bells filled the air with their glad pealings, the music of the organ rolled out from the magnificent church, and humble hands lifted mother and babe out of the way of the gay assembly which poured out from that ceremony which had proclaimed before the altar that God had joined together those two! She also went her way from the church door, companioned by misery and un comforted even by her child. She wandered on, wandered on day and night, up and down, back and forth, watching no longer, searching no more, but as one stunned by a blow or walking in a dream; her money gone—for she would take none of his; too wretched to work, cast out and roofless in her poverty; with the streets and houses, men and women, trees and sky, all like shadows in a strange vision; even the baby at her breast seemed unreal, like a phantom carried in sleep, till its plaintive moans pierced to the depths where maternity survived, though all else was slain, and roused her to the bitterness and sharp agony of reality. She begged for a pittance to preserve her child; she grew frantic at the cries she could not still; she clasped it close to her bosom to give it warmth; she called out to the passers-by to look at her baby, to tell her what was the matter with it—oh! what was the matter with it? and what should she do? And some stopped and did look, and shook their heads, and went on, and some thought she was insane; and she knelt down in the shades of evening on the cold stones, and prayed and prayed to the Great Power that seemed so far off, while His Angel Death stood so near by; and then she gazed down at the little white face grown suddenly still, and went wholly mad.

It was long past midnight, when a noisy group of such women as only haunt the streets at such hours, came laughing and capering out of a heated dance revel, singing their loose songs, and chaffing each other in that fictitious gayety born of wine and excitement; on they flung, a half dozen reckless and ruined creatures, caring naught for man or heaven, with their mirth-ringing hollow beneath the stars, and their peacock plumes mellowed by the moonlight; on they came to where a single figure stood upon the pavement, holding a dead baby in her arms, and babbling of brooks and fields. They paused, at first wonder-

ing at the burst of childish talk that greeted them, and then closed round about her in a ring of sad and pitying faces.

Perhaps it was the young visage, so wan and pathetic, that touched them; perhaps it was the dead baby that awed them; perhaps the dethroned mind that shocked them; or perhaps from their own experience they divined something of her unhappy story. Their levity died away, their quips and quirks were silenced, their bacchanal song was strangled by a sigh, their hearts and eyes filled up, and all that came out from them was pure, womanly in look, in voice, in deed. They took the small, cold form reverently out of the straining arms; with tender words and gentle caresses they soothed the perturbed spirit, and lovingly and kindly as sisters led her to their own abiding place, and ministered to her in turn during a long and life-threatening illness, with the care, the patience, the generosity of closest kinship; and while she lay alike unconscious of good offices and personal grief, took her little infant and placed it solemnly, with church service of chant and scripture, in its grave within a suburban cemetery, shedding tears over the "earth to earth" that might have washed white many a sin and relieved more than one memory.

While she was sick and weak they were all forbearance and goodness toward her, but with the faint bloom of returning strength their former indifference and carelessness came back, and they spake many a bitter truth, in their flippant way, of the world and men that subverted any dawning hope of help to be gathered therefrom; and they shared with her freely and unaparingly, without counting the cost of their ill-gained gold. She had no other friends; in the whole wide world she had not one to go to for succor, for counsel, for upholding; none cared for her save only these in a sort of fellowship of good-will; she was reckless of herself, ruined as they were, with hell-fire in the past and an outlook of despair in the future. So she was fain to stay with them, to become one of them, to strive to drown in wild orgies the gnawing recollections, to smother beneath the life of the senses the unceasing struggle of a tortured soul. For a whole year she drifted through the slough of shameful circumstance, endeavoring in a mad whirl of excitement to harden her nature to her state, in the abandonment of license to find oblivion or distraction. But in vain—in vain! The nights avenged the days; her dead baby came to her in dreams, lay in her bosom as she slept, touched her with its tiny hands, filled her empty arms; the ghost of her slaughtered love rose up stainless beside her darker deeds; even the dumb creatures she had known called to her from afar, and drew near and looked at her with wistful eyes as if they grieved for her lost condition; through the loudest revelry she heard her child's meaning wail, and could not shut out with wine or wassail from her inward sight the last look of its dying eyes. There was no escaping from the witness within her; she fought the incarnate spirit with every carnal weapon, but the still, small voice could not be silenced; and at last there grew upon her such a horror of her course, such a loathing of herself, such a longing for emancipation from evil doings and disgraceful ties, that she sank into a brooding melancholy that, without speech, irritated and reproached her companions. And then

these women, who had rescued her in madness, nursed her in illness, ministered to her in want, buried her baby—scoffed at her sadness, satirized her scruples, jeered and jested at the signs of lingering principle. Gratitude gave her endurance; she could never, never forget that they had once been kind, and tender, and true. So one day she called them all together, told them in touching words that she must go out from them, must belong to them no more; parted among them all she had gained in that unhappy year of dress and trinkets, embraced them all over and over, and went forth in her old faded robe to seek for work and peace. But work was not to be found; at the old places where they knew and pitied her once, they asked for her record now, and would have none of her; and she discovered, too, that some change in the times had made the field scanty and the laborers many; so she passed through a hard probation of starvation and distress that assailed her with temptation, and tried her through and through, soul and body. She fancied that her own self scorn was reflected in every one's eyes and echoed in every voice, till she was almost filled with a dread of human beings, yet in her terrible loneliness craved something to solace her yearning solitude. And then she bethought her of the farm-creatures she had loved; they were not human, and cared not if the caressing hand belonged to sinner or to saint, and perhaps they had not forgotten her; for though it seemed so long ago to her, it had really been but a little while in the calendar of men since she had been with them. So she had gone all that long distance just to look again upon the fields where her childhood had been spent, and to seek a little grain of comfort from the animals she had fed and nurtured. It was such a little hope left out of all that life had once had for her! and it cost her some last sacrifice and left her penniless. She had been to the familiar meadows, where she had made hay and picked clover in the past, where the peace of God which passeth understanding rested in the sunshine and stillness, and soothed her mind and nerves; but the dogs had barked at her, the lambs fled away from her, the cows looked at her with unconscious eyes, and a strange farm-hand had driven her off as an intruding tramp. The dumb creatures had forgotten her; she was so changed by her sin and her sorrow; she knew all of them, but she had become only a stranger, even to the dun Alderney she had reared up from birth.

And now she was going back to the great city to find her baby's grave, and die there—death was the only merciful thing in this world for such as she! Only, as she had passed on her footsore way through this sweet town, she had suddenly seen the Young Mother and her Baby sitting at the window; all her heart leaped up at the sight—it was the first baby she had seen since her own was taken from her. Some invisible power seemed to draw her across the street; she thought if she could only touch the little hands, press the little face, it would be like a blessing to her! That to kiss once more a baby's pure lips would be like the baptism of Christ, though her sins were scarlet as blood! And now more than that had come to her—more than had ever come to her in her life before—a good woman had put her arms about her, and had not spurned her, because she, too, had been a mother! But oh! let her go now—let her

go—it was more than she could bear—let her go to her own baby!

The Young Mother had listened with tears running down her cheeks; in her heart of hearts she had felt that every word was truth, and never before in her love-sheltered existence had she realized the wickedness and wretchedness of a world outside her own. As she listened, she had thought—thought with reason contending with that charity which overcometh all things—should she keep her, this waif from the under-world of vice, this woman torn with suffering, strife and repentance? Should she hold her fast as a precious soul to be saved from wrath to come? or should she send her forth again from a haven of refuge and safety to fresh hardship, contumely and suicide, and so have before her conscience an accusing figure forever and forever? Could she bring her young sisters into the atmosphere of one so tainted? Could she trust her child with one who had been dragged through the mud of the earth? Was sin contagious from the body? Ah! her little babe had lain in those stained arms, had smiled in that face, and had taken no harm. Was it infectious from the spirit? Surely this woman's soul was purified by penitence! Only speech and action could convey evil; could she not guard against that? Ought she not to give her a trial? Would it not be time enough to turn her away when her influence proved corrupt? Should she help her? Should she save her? Dared she, who was happy, and had her own Baby safe, thrust out another, who was most miserable, and whose baby was dead? Whose baby was dead! Her tears welled out—the charity that overcometh had won the day. She was no longer to bear a sinner, an outcast, a Magdalen, but only a mother whose baby was dead.

And when the other said more quietly, "You know all now; you can only think badly of me like all the rest!" she took the thin hands in hers, and answered: "I think you have been more sinned against than sinning, and that the dear Father in Heaven has brought you to me. Will you stay with me, and take care of my Baby? I have great need of some one who will put love into this work, and maybe after awhile my little one will comfort you for your own."

Surprised by this unexpected offer, she, to whom kindness was so unusual, looked up as one astounded.

"You will take me?" she said, slowly; "you will keep me? You will give me your Baby?"

"I will give you more," replied the Young Mother. "I will give you Love and a Great Trust. And you can help or harm me much; for if you are loyal and faithful to me and yourself, you will give me a larger and surer confidence in all humanity; but if you do not deal righteously and truly with me, I shall never dare to listen to the voice of my own soul again! You see it is an experiment for both."

The woman bowed down her head, and there was silence between them for a minute. Then she lifted her eyes with a new light in them.

"I could not have dreamed there was anything left for me in this world to do!" she answered. "I will live, since you do not think me unworthy of such a trust, if only to try and prove to you

that there is something true in me still! I will stay with you. I will be faithful."

And as a sign and token of their compact, the Young Mother lifted Baby from its crib, and laid her on the other's breast.

"Oh, my baby! my own baby!" she broke out, "I must see my baby's grave!"

"Not now, dear," said the Young Mother. "I cannot let you leave me yet. Some day we will go there together!"

The whole family, as they came in and out, passed judgment on the New Nurse. When the Young Father found her installed in his home, he privately remarked to his wife that she looked rather delicate for such a weight as Baby was getting to be; and the Young Mother put her arms about him, and replied: "Dearest love, she has had hard times; we will make her stronger among us; and just see how Baby takes to her!" and she never told him any more than that, she who kept nothing else hid from him all through her life. Grandfather Number Two said he "was glad that Baby had got any kind of a nurse at last, so that he could hear something else talked about." But Grandfather Number One studied the pale face more than once as he played with Baby; and one day, when the Young Mother went with him out of the room, he put his arms round her, and bade "God bless her for a good lass! For there has been a sore life in there," he said, "and she is finding peace with my dear girl!"

"O papa!" she whispered, "how do you know?"

"I know nothing of your Nurse," he answered, "but I can tell a good work when I see it!"

"O papa, papa!" she murmured; "it isn't me; it is all the Baby! Don't you see that it is Baby who is healing and helping her?" And Grandfather Number One laid her face against his for a moment, and went quietly forth.

The Grandmothers were inclined to be decidedly critical at first, in consequence of ineffectual visits to the Intelligence Offices, and from disapproval of taking in a servant without a reference; but they could not help but notice her patience and loving care of her charge, and when they beheld her sewing were completely won over, and went about proclaiming her a treasure. And the Young Aunties wondered that she shrank from them a little, and was so shy when they were so gay and gracious with her; but Baby loved her—that was evident enough—and so they were determined to be good to her; and soon after the faded dress had been taken away by the Young Mother, and destroyed entirely from being a reminder of the past, Baby's Nurse was many times overcome with thoughtful little gifts of collars and cuffs, aprons and ribbons, and generous overflowings of young and gushing hearts. While from the Poor Relation, whose instinctive sympathy divined that here was one who sorrowed greatly, there came sometimes such gentle words of strength, such upholding of the sinking spirit, that the tried soul clung to her saving grace as though this other woman had indeed been a holy priest ordained of God. And the Fat Nurse, dropping in one day with her basket and umbrella, watched her keenly with her twinkling eyes, and said afterward to the Young Mother: "You've did well by your Baby, mum; for she's got the

Mother-heart, and that's the best recommendation any nurse can have!"

One day, when the following Spring had made all the earth green, the Young Mother and the New Nurse went away to the great city, passing through its noise and bustle to another city on its quiet borders, whose people were very still in their last homes—the silent City of the Dead; and among the lowly graves of the poor found a little mound grown over with waving grass and golden buttercups; and what befell there of remembrance and remorse, of weeping and consolation, gratitude and goodness, the two women locked up in their hearts, and never spoke of again; but, before they came away, the lonely grave was covered over with myrtle, and set round with roses, and when next they saw it there was a small, white stone at the head, on which was only cut, "In memory of a Baby," for this child had died without a name.

And the New Nurse lived all her long years with them, and kept her promise, and was faithful to the end. She came to be like one of their own family, and was respected and trusted, loved and looked up to. It was she who took all their new-born children in her arms, and tenderly laid out all their dead; she dressed the young for their bridal, and closed the eyes of the old; she rejoiced in their joy, sorrowed with their sorrow, shared their burdens; and the next generation never thought but that she had always been one of them. A weird sort of wisdom from much introspection fell on her, and many an earnest word of hers took root for salvation in restless or wayward hearts; fruits meet for repentance marked all her unassuming way; her eyes shone with a beautiful peace; and she who had been cast down and desolate, made gladness for the angels in Heaven.

Many years afterward, when Baby had grown to be a young lady, when the Young Father had become a rich and renowned citizen and the Young Mother a wise and well-beloved matron, much courted in the social life of the great city where she visited, she met the man who had wrought this ruin, prosperous and debonair, esteemed and honored, the cynosure of fashion, head and front of his admiring circle still. It struck him with strange novelty and curious wonder that this one woman, so sought after and distinguished, should meet him always with cold eyes, or turn from him with averted glances. It made him uneasy, this Epicurean who shrank from a crumpled rose-leaf, and that any one human being should disdain or discountenance him was a skeleton at his life-long feast that must speedily be banished. So, watching one night at a great assembly till he had seen her a little apart, with the graceful effrontery of a practiced man of the world, he ventured to question her of the why and thus. She turned her sweet, fair face full upon him all kindling with long-kept indignation and contempt, and spoke out from her sincere heart the stinging answer: "For twenty years I have sheltered in my house the woman whose life you ruined, whose youth you destroyed; and I therefore deem you unworthy even of her scorn! You are loathsome as a lie! and I forbid you ever to approach or speak to me again!"

He winced and writhed under her righteous

anger and plain-spoken words, that like a sharp knife had cut into his vanity and his memory; he slipped away from her speechless and cowed; and whether or not his conscience ever reproached him with remorseful remembrances, he never forgot the crumpled rose-leaf in his career—the expressed odium of one honest spirit.

And never in all the days of her life did this true woman breathe to any one else, Father or Mother, husband, sister or child, that other woman's secret of a Baby's Grave.

V.

THE CRIPPLED SISTER.

ON her bed she lay day after day, year in and year out, white and helpless, with large eyes melancholy with the sadness of long suffering. Only the unwearied hands rested not, and the active brain never ceased from thinking. What dreams of health and happiness, what disappointed hopes, what unspoken repinings, what agonies of despair, what rebellious reflections, what writtings with destiny, what strivings for patience, had been worked off upon the exquisite embroidery that grew under her delicate fingers! for always before her was a snowy, diaphanous muslin, with its fine tracery of leaves and flowers, vines and fruit, and into every branch and every blossom she wove her life, and by the perfectly wrought designs she won the cost of her living. One day it would be a lovely wedding-dress that was spread over her humble couch, and out of her tender blessings on the bride, her sweet fancies of a bliss she could never know, there would be evolved a wonderful result of interwoven beauty, with a poetic meaning in it all that perhaps the wearer would never guess; and only the worker, touching gently her undivided creation, would know that each design was significant of a good wish—the lilies for purity, the roses for love, the wheat for plenty, the heart's ease for content. Or it would be an infant's robe to be made rich and rare with unrivalled adornment, and little would the pleased mother suspect the yearnings over the untried future and the visions of its coming life that were wrought through and through her child's dainty garment; how upon each thread-born wreath there hung prayers for the coming years, and how every festoon had felt the prophetic outlook of a solitary spirit to whom a new-born babe seemed like an angel fresh from God, to be once more, when earthly career was over, a bearer of palm-branches in the universal heaven. Or, once in awhile, they would bring her a spotless shroud to fashion for the dead, and would find unexpectedly laid upon it some mystic emblem to grace the grave, an amaranth or a winged globe, to symbolize to hearts that looked thereon the sweet everlasting Beyond. For never unto others went forth the bitterness of tortured flesh or prisoned existence; the white roses that she raised were the flowers of silence; the womanhood that was in her naturally taught her repression; the unselfishness of her spirit held her back from saddening others; and her thought of God and want of outer experience gave her a trust and faith that could overcome at last her weariness, her isolation, her doubts. But there were times—oh! there were times when the frail body went through the very Valley of the

Shadow of Death; when the pain, the impotence, the unquiet of a separated lot would stir the tried soul with inward storms of revolt and longing; when the unuttered heart-cries were as piercing and tempestuous in unseen ears as those of a strong man in his agony. But Love was about her always; and, as unto those to whom little is given, spontaneous gratitude is great for that little—the suffusing glow of thankfulness for returning ease, the throb of sincere joy at a new attention, the bursting of sunlight into her room, the sight of the calm, blue sky, the sound of a tender voice, would still the tumult, and through the shining point of her needle her discontent would flow into lines of beauty, and peace would return with the needed pursuit, and by counting over her pleasures she conquered her pain. For much and many ministered to her. The Aged Father and Mother added to her wisdom, poured out for her the hoary experiences of accumulated years, caressed her with their withered hands, shone upon her with their wrinkled faces, where affection beamed brighter than their eyes; and she, who was the Poor Relation in other homes, but the Light of the Household here, she never tired in her tendence; she who, without a word, knew all that passed within the kindred mind, whose sweet sympathy soothed, whose genial cheerfulness uplifted, whose arms were around her in the night-watches of suffering, whose days never brought forgetfulness of a single loving care, and who was at once Sister, Friend and Physician of soul and body. Then there were those abroad who came to her in kindness, often bringing gifts of thoughtfulness and overflowing compassion. The Grandfathers would come, thumping their gold-headed canes upon the floor and her nerves, with hearty salutations, and the very breath of fresh outer air on their portly persons and ruddy faces; and the chirpy Grandmothers, with their gossip talk of the younger generation, and something nice to tempt the delicate taste, made from an old family receipt that none possessed but themselves. And the Young Aunties, by twos and threes—bright and beautiful with youth, full of lightness and mirth, gleeful with girlhood's quips and quirks, and always ready to relate all that was going on in their happy world—the last party, the latest fashion, the newest books, blushing confidences, tremulous hopes, sometimes the sentimental woes and imaginary ills; sure always of a cordial listener and faithful adviser, and rarely thinking that their gayety and grace might cause a pang to one to whom youth and beauty and the world beyond her chamber-walls were evermore denied. Then her bird sang for her such a delicious song that it awakened marvelous harmonies within, and was sometimes echoed by strains unheard of mortal ears; for that one voice concentrated for her the chorussed music of the groves; the liquid notes linked themselves to the harmony of the spheres, and an awe-inspiring refrain of cherubim and seraphim seemed to float to her from the far-off Everlasting! And when the little golden songster tucked his head under his wing at night, her fancy went out all over the earth, and saw in all climes birds of all kinds and plumage nestling into slumber, and her eyes filled with yearning tears over these feathered innocents, which were thus her only link with God's dumb creatures. And as she gazed out of her window at the small patch of sky she could see therefrom, the

floating clouds wore varied shapes for her—shapes beautiful or fantastic, making always a changing panorama of which she never tired. Sometimes it was a dark dragon, with overlapping scales and forked tongue; anon a soft, gray vision of clustered towers and spires; and again weird and witching faces would form and dissolve against the serene blue; sometimes a white angel with outspread wings would hover over her, and sometimes the sunset glories would make a gorgeous garden of heavenly blossoms before her eyes; but oftener a snowy dove would brood in the great immensity, and then she felt as if the Spirit filled her heart and mind, and lifted her in aspiration till she was no longer a crippled and pain-stricken body, but only a chosen soul taken behind the veil of flesh and sense to behold the secret mysteries of being. Thus in her quiet room, in the silence and solitude of a separated life, she was neither desolate, nor despairing, nor deprived of the solace which the good God gives to all who have hearts to feel. But, nevertheless, one thing troubled her much: others did so much for her; some one, it seemed to her, was always bringing her help or pleasure; but there was so little she could do for any one! Her Father in Heaven was loving and bountiful in His mercies to her, but there was nothing she could do for Him! Praise Him, like her bird, she sometimes did from the very depths of her nature; but she longed, almost infinitely at times, to reach out toward His children on the earth, and repay to them her debt to Him. In her own home the proceeds of her daily work assisted in maintaining the life that was there, and secured her from becoming a burden upon much-taxed and slender resources. But still this was so little, so little, and she knew not how to do more, her world was so narrow and she came in contact with so few. Her heart was full as a fountain of its waters, but she had no direction in which to pour out the overflow; the sacred hour of opportunity had not arrived—the right chord had not yet been struck.

One day they sent the Baby to see her—the bright-eyed, rosy-mouthed Baby, with the little golden rings of hair fringing the dainty cap, and the tiny dimpled hand stretching out to her from beneath the embroidered cape of the long cloak. It was almost the only Baby she remembered ever to have known, for the Young Aunties were not born in her neighborhood, and it was so long since there had been a baby in the family. Instantly a new tenderness and vague yearning sprang up in her soul; perhaps the woman's regret that never, never would the blessing of Motherhood be hers, mingled with the other expressions on her pale face; perhaps, too, there was something more which told that only alone could the lonely spirit grapple with and overcome these unusual emotions, for Baby's Nurse, wise from her own experiences, quietly took off Baby's wraps, laid the soft white-robed creature in her arms, and went swiftly from the room. She remained away but a little while, not long enough to tire too much the fragile arms; but in that time the Crippled Sister had shed drops and drops of shining tears over the placid Baby, who looked up at her with strangely wise eyes, not frightened at her unfamiliar face, but as if also pondering the secret things of the heart, for babies sometimes seem so freshly come from Paradise, that either memories or meditation

over unseen marvels appear to hold them in temporary stillness and contemplation, and to give a sense of speechless knowledge past our understanding who have come so far away from the wonder-world which is the source of life and light.

"O Baby, Baby!" she said, in her very heart of hearts, "you are a miracle! for you are a soul—one of God's souls born into this world—this world where souls struggle and suffer! How I wish—oh, how I wish that I, even I, crippled and useless, could stand between you and all the pain of the future! Sweet, tender blossom, dear innocent birdie, why cannot you always be a Baby? why must you grow up to be crowned with thorns, to be crucified, as every soul must be, before you go back to that other life! Blessings may come to you—blessings will come to you, for you are the Baby of love and hope; but oh, you new-made darling! you have come into a hard world, for you have been born a woman!"

For it suddenly seemed to the Crippled Sister as if she had never before so keenly felt or fancied the strife, the poverty, the crime of this earth, as when she looked upon this untired, sinless being, and there dawned upon her a sudden terrible dream of the might be of any human existence; all the agony and rebellion of her own years rolled up, and momentarily smote down her long patience, but out of it arose a longing almost divine, to shelter, to shield, not this one only, but all young and untainted lives, from the wrath and evil to come. With that singular outlook born of solitude and imagination, she beheld countless homes where babies bloomed—babies, all to be men and women some day—and she shuddered as she thought what men and women were in the world, and how even the sweetest and purest knew sorrow and needed strength. And she—she who would fain have suffered, in her great hour of yearning over a baby and her race, that the many might be made white from their sins again—what could she do? What could she do? It seemed to her as if she was the smallest, most useless, most impotent creation in the universe, lying there growing almost weary under the weight of a single mortal Baby. But the child was God's angel and brought His message! She always said afterwards, if it had not been for the Baby she never would have gained the idea, for as Baby lay quite still looking solemnly up at her, thoughts and plans flashed in upon her like electric sparks struck from the innocent presence.

In a few minutes it had all come into her mind, clear and vivid as a reading of God's word; the Baby's little hand had touched the waiting chord; through the Baby's pure eyes she had seen her opportunity; the Baby had given her at last a work to do for her Father in Heaven and her race on earth. And as if this Baby had divined that its mission was ended, and as if it had just dawned upon its infantile sense that the glowing face bending over its own was that of neither Mother nor Nurse, it set up a very human cry, and the latter came in, put on the long white cloak, held up the pouting mouth to be kissed by pale, quivering lips, and carried her charge away, pondering in her own heart what manner of emotions the Child had awakened in the Crippled Sister's spirit.

A few days afterwards the Light of the Household went forth into the poor places of the neighborhood, and brought in, one by one, shrinking

children, with shabby garments and shy glances; little girls ungathered into schools, untaught of ignorant parents who were slaves of labor, to whom was preached no Gospel of salvation from idleness, weakness or vice. These, allured in unwillingly at first, hard enough for a time to keep together, came at last into this quiet chamber as to a holy shrine, sat earnestly at the feet of a pale, patient teacher, and learned the ways of truth and right, took from her untiring zeal a shield of work or wisdom to defend them in days to come from dependence, debasement and ruin. Day by day—for a few minutes only sometimes, sometimes for hours, according to her fluctuating strength—she had them with her, pouring out the garnered stores of unforgotten reading in simple language, and opening up new worlds for unformed minds; peopling for them with her sweet fancy the woods, the streams, the air, with as beautiful spiritings as the old fantastic shapes of pagan lore; showing them what she saw in the sky; telling them what her bird sang to her, breathing into their receptive souls the peace and good-will that angels hymn to mankind, clothing common facts in such attractive forms that knowledge grew to be better than choice gold, and making labor so sacred and honorable in their eyes, that to do seemed well as to be wise. It was slow work, slow and anxious and earnest, taking more patience than the bearing of pain, calling upon the deepest fountains of love for all the charity that suffereth long and hopeth all things; for ignorance, habit and inherited traits are formidable fortresses to assail, and can only be overcome by continuance in well-doing. Clumsy fingers and unopened minds were equally difficult to guide and to train; but when the heart was once won the will grew strong, and out of her untiring effort came evidence of fine fruition at last.

In the poor homes where they belonged the mothers listened with a sort of awe to the accounts of this pale lady, lying always on her couch, covered with the white, fleecy folds of her delicate work, and giving out to little rapt listeners thoughts that would abide with them all their lives; and the first result of this feeling was clean faces and smooth pinafores. Then the children's talk brought new ideas to the laboring fathers that brightened the weary toil, and something gentler seemed to steal into the hard and bare existences, and so the sweet influences radiated farther than she could feel, and her work was wider than she knew.

After awhile Christmas was drawing near, and one day there was an interesting assemblage of these small scholars in a room where one of them lived, whose mother was a washerwoman, and upon tubs and buckets they were seated in a circle, with their childish countenances expressive of anxious meditation. The weather was cold, and the devices to secure warmth, mostly consisting of capes and shawls belonging to grown-up people and much too large for their present wearers, gave them generally the appearance of animated bundles with a face at one end, and the tips of very worn shoes—sometimes of bare toes, peeping out of the other; and the subject of their meeting and consultation was, How to Get a Christmas Present for the Crippled Sister, and What It Should Be.

No thought of expediency or custom entered these youthful and inexperienced minds; it was a

matter of pure love and gratitude, or, as one of them put it, "She's bin mighty good and lovin' to us, and we want to do suthin' to make her feel we know it!" The leader of the meeting was a grave little damsel with quiet eyes, who seemed to take a natural precedence.

"Now, Anner Mariar," she said to a buzzing wee thing beside her, "there ain't no use in guessin' and talkin' so much; let's count up; each girl say how much she can give; we've got to know that first of all. You begin, Anner Mariar; how much are you goin' to have by Christmas?"

"Well," chirped out this small being from the folds of a large red muffler, "I'm a goin' to settle down and take a place to mind Mrs. McGoffin's baby next door; it's an awful big baby, and drefful cross, but I guess I kin do it, and get my share for the teacher! I'm to have twenty-five cents a week, but I have to give Mam most of it, cos' I can't work out, and go the Lady's, and help her, too! but I kin save five cents a week off anyhow! It ain't much, but it's better'n nothin', and Lord knows I'll earn it with that baby!"

"There, now, Anner Mariar, that'll do; let somebody else say something, will you?" interposed the youthful President. "Jane O'Connor, what do you think you'll have?"

The O'Connor's child wound herself very tight in a big plaid shawl.

"I'm goin' to do chores in the mornin' for a boardin'-house, carry up the coals and sich, and they're to pay me ten cents a day. I spec' the old man will take a good deal of it for gin, but I mean to screw a quarter of it out anyhow, if I have to fight for it!"

"So far so good," observed the approving Chief. "Nettie Blane, it's your turn!"

Nettie looked down abashed by the superior facilities of her companions, and spoke in a rather low and tremulous tone.

"I ain't likely to have a chance to earn any money; but Uncle Jim—he's a sailor, you know—he brought me two lovely shells home from his last voyage; they're all smooth and pink inside, such a beautiful color, and have got scalloped edges just like lace, and I thought maybe I could sell them!"

Hereupon ensued an animated discussion as to the probability of the market value of these treasures, and much advice as to places where there would be most likelihood of disposing of them. Little Nettie's cheeks flushed as pink as the shells themselves with excitement over the subject, and her youthful soul experienced the first pain and joy of sacrifice.

Then the question of resources was put to each of the others in turn, and each made some hopeful reply. One had an uncle who always gave her something for Christmas, and she thought she could coax him to present it a few days beforehand; and one had a tin bank into which she had dropped all the few pennies she had received for two or three years, and she was willing to contribute all of them; and so on through the whole group, till a rough estimate was made by the grave little President, after much struggling with the arithmetical problem, and the financial committee rose up from the tubs and buckets in quite tumultuous delight at the amount of the uncollected sum. They circled round for some minutes in rather noisy glee, till the small Chief called them

unceremoniously to order by standing on a tub and exclaiming: "Look here! We have found out How To Do It, but we haven't made up our minds yet What It Is To Be!"

There was an immediate subsidence at this suggestion, and the important deliberation was resumed. This was a very serious question indeed, as it was no longer a matter requiring individual responsibility, but a general decision and consent, and the tone of the discussion became much more argumentative. "What It Should Be" was one of those puzzles requiring experience in intuition to decide, and wild and extravagant were some of the first propositions by the more thoughtless and those uninitiated into the cost of things.

"I tell you what," said Anna Maria, "there's nothin' like a big cake! there was one stayed in the baker's window ever so long till last Christmas, and it was all over shinin' white icin', and it had a yaller, and a red, and a blue rose right on top; and oh, my! it was just splendid. I used to stand, and stand, and stand, and look at it till my toes were a-most froze, just a-thinkin' what an awful lot of nice eatin' there was in it! Now, I say let it be a cake, for it's so good and so Christmassy!"

"Anner Marier," remarked the small President, "you're just crazy! Have you any idear what that cake cost? Besides, the Lady gets enough to eat, and she isn't the sort as is always thinking of her stomach."

Anna Maria was quenched for a moment, but retained a sense of injury at being thus unceremoniously snubbed, which only waited for an opportunity to be vented.

Directly the O'Connor's child observed that she thought it would be nice to give the Lady a whole lot of fine thread for her work, because she used so much all the time.

"Thread!" contemptuously retorted Anna Maria, "who ever heard tell of thread for a Christmas present!"

"It's a heap more useful nor a cake!" replied the other.

"Pooh!" said Anna Maria, "people never gets useful things at Christmas, only something pretty to look at, and good things to eat."

"Well, anyhow, I guess she wouldn't care about a cake!"

"I bet she would then!"

"She wouldn't!"

"She would!"

"Hold yer tongue!"

"I won't!"

"Then take that!" and the O'Connor's child gave Anna Maria a quick slap on the cheek. Anna Maria, not having been trained in the Scripture doctrine of turning the other cheek when she was smitten once, was about to return the blow, when the little Chief, with her face all aglow, stepped in between the excited parties.

"Ain't you ashamed of yourselves, after all the blessed things the Lady's bin teaching us! Didn't she read us out of the Good Book one day, 'Little children, love one another!' and talk to us about it till we couldn't most of us a-help crying? And you two ain't no better nor you had never heard it at all! Do you think she'd care about a cake, or anything at all, if she knew you'd bin fighting over it? Now, you just kiss and make up, and don't have no more such sass!" And Anna Maria and the O'Connor's child were quite overcome,

and fell upon each other's necks and kissed, and then sat lovingly down together on the same tub.

Then, after this, strange and various articles were proposed, to which many objections were raised, principally by the little President, who seemed to think her most important duty was to keep the intended expenditure within the limits of the probable amount, for which purpose she was obliged to do a good many sums out loud. The puzzle was growing deeper, and the likelihood of a decision seemed farther off than ever, when Nettie Blane said, in her soft voice: "I know what the Lady loves more than anything else, and that's flowers! Why, just here awhile ago, before it got so cold, I found a bunch of wild posies growing alongside the road as I was going to her house; they were just common things, but I picked them and took them to her, and you just ought to have seen her over them! Her face lit all up, she was so pleased, and do you know that for a minute she looked like she never was sick at all; and she kind of petted them with her fingers, and thanked me so nice that I never was so glad of doing anything in my life! Now, don't you all think she'd rather have flowers—real nice flowers, I mean, like you see young gentlemen taking to their sweethearts; not anything we could find, but something we'd have to buy?"

The unconscious poetry in this little girl's soul had vaguely divined that material gifts were not delicate enough for this lonely spirit who communed with things unseen. Nettie's earnestness enforced her idea, which seemed to impress the fancies of her companions, till one exclaimed: "But flowers die so soon, and then she would never have nothin' to keep to make her feel that we'd bin thinkin' of her!"

An anxious shade fell over Nettie Blane's face, that however instantly brightened with a new thought.

"Oh, yes she would," she said, "because she'd always remember! Don't you know, somehow, if you once get a thing, you've always got it, even if you don't see it! If I sell my shells, it don't much matter really, because whenever I think about them they'll always be in my heart, and I'll always know that Uncle Jim he brought them to me over the sea!"

The wise intuitions of the little philosopher struck the poetic chord in the small, surrounding humans. Some one murmured: "Things ought to be awful pretty to be remembered always!" And the general consent seemed to settle without dispute that a basket of flowers would be the very sweetest thing in the world to give.

"And I know of a man who keeps a hot-house just out of town," said the young President, "and he looks good-humored and kind, so maybe he'll give us something real nice for what we'll have to pay!"

And soon after the meeting dispersed, each one going her way, with the sense of quite an important aim embellishing the future.

The day before Christmas, as the big, burly and rosy owner of the conservatory just out of town was sorting his choicest blooms for a large wedding which was to take place in the evening, with a deftness hardly to have been expected from the size of his fingers, the door of the hot-house suddenly opened, and a squadron of a dozen or more

small girls, headed by a grave-eyed little damsel, entered in solemn procession.

"Bless my soul!" said the Gentle Giant, turning his bluff, bright face toward them, "what do you young ones want?"

For an instant they had stood quite still, looking about them in wonder and delight; for the whole place was so filled with rare and lovely blossoms that its atmosphere, color and profusion was like a concentration of the tropics. Anna Maria nudged the O'Connor's child to look at yellow oranges ripening amid their own foliage, and murmured: "Oh, my! they're really growin' there, they are!"

And Nettie Blane's tender gaze lingered on the white camellias and clustered azaleas, as if for the first time in her life she had realized a fulfilled sense of perfect beauty. But the Young Leader, deeply impressed with the importance of her errand, had never taken her eyes off the hearty countenance of the Big Gardener, and was not to be diverted from its practical pursuit by any allurements of tint or odor, and in her quiet voice replied to his surprised salutation: "If you please, sir, we want to buy a basket of flowers."

The man dropped the two or three buds he held in his hand, turned entirely around, and gave one steady look down the whole line; he saw at once that they were not likely to want flowers for themselves, and imagined that one or two had been sent on a message, and that the rest had accompanied these.

"You—want—to—buy," he said, slowly.

"Yes, sir, a basket of flowers, if you please."

"Who for? and why are there so many of you?"

"Well, sir, I'll tell you. You see, sir, there's a dear, kind Lady, and she's a cripple, and never gets off a low kind of bed she lays on, and works all the time the most beautiful brodering flowers you ever seen. And she teaches us; we go there to her room, and she tells us—oh, she tells us such sweet things about everything, and she tries to make us good, and we're learning ever so much from her! So we thought we'd like to give her a Christmas present, and we've all saved up till we think we've got enough; and because she never can go out to see anything a-growing, and just loves flowers like they were alive, we made up our minds to take her some; because we all give something toward it we all came together about it; and if you please, sir, we'd like as nice a basketful as you can make up for our money."

The rosy face bloomed out bright as one of his own blossoms; the round eyes grew wonderfully soft and moist, as the big, burly man stooped and kissed the small speaker, and said, with just a touch of huskiness in his voice: "Well, you're a blessed little party! You just go round, all of you, and pick out what you'd like to have, and I'll fix them up for you!"

There was an immediate stir in the young procession, an evident delight in this permission, and an intention to put it instantly into practice, when the Small Leader called out: "You keep still there, will you? I've got something else to say!"

Curiosity restored order, and she again addressed the gardener.

"Ain't those grand flowers very dear? You see, sir, we don't want anything we can't pay for all right; because, you know, if you were to go

and put in out of goodness something that ought to cost more than we've got the money for, it would be you a-giving, not us! Besides, if it was too fine, the Lady would be worried with thinking where we'd got enough to do it with! So if you will please to give us something as nice as you can for just what we can pay for it, we will be so much obliged. We've got this much money; please to count it, sir, and see if it will do!" And she handed him a rather battered tin match-box containing the accumulated contributions in small coins, as they had been gradually brought in as they were gained.

And as the Gentle Giant took the minute box in his big hands he had to cough to keep down an uncomfortable choking in his throat, and which became even more troublesome when Nettie Blane stepped up to him, and said: "If we can afford it, sir, could you put in a Lily? because it seems as if she ought to have white flowers, and I know she loves lilies because she always sets so many of them in her work; and I heard her say one day—like to herself—that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!"

The Big Gardener by this time was too much touched to keep quite calm.

"Here," he said to the Little Leader, "you count out this money, and tell me how much it is, and I'll do the best I can for it!"

As the grave voice enumerated the amount, piece by piece, the rest looked and listened with an eager pride in the limited sum which was pathetic to behold, as every penny of it had been earned by some sort of sacrifice. And when the Big Gardener took a basket and went round his hot-house collecting here and there his simplest blooms, all these keen eyes watched him in unbroken silence, and not one of them stirred a gaze from his fingers as he laid in the moss, propped a superb, stainless lily in the centre, and arranged round it with exquisite taste, violets and heart-ease, and delicate, pure blossoms; in breathless quiet they noted every flower that was woven into its place, little thinking that these commoner plants which they were used to see in summer were almost as costly as foreign growths in winter; and it was not till the whole was finished that they broke out into exclamations of satisfaction.

"This must be a mighty good woman to make you love her so!" said the man as he handed over the basket to the careful hold of the Little Leader.

"Good?" answered Nettie Blane, "she's a-most an angel; it seems like she ought never to do anything but stand up close to the Throne with just such lilies in her hand!"

For Nettie's inmost heart was stirred by the flowers and the occasion.

The Big Gardener looked at her a second as if he thought she might have been a stray cherub herself.

"That's all your own gift," he said, pointing to the lily-crowned basket; "but would you mind taking her a little present from me, too?"

There was a pause in general fear lest his superior resources might eclipse the glory of their own offering; the Gentle Giant smiled and answered the unexpressed thought.

"It shall only be one flower," he said; and as a single flower in their inexperienced eyes could not possibly compare with a basketful, a happy assent was immediately given.

He went round among his plants to where bloomed one magnificent blossom, the only one of its kind in the green-house. For months and months he had nurtured this particular growth with the utmost care, training it toward the production of this one flower with the solicitude of a father for a child, knowing that its rarity and splendor would bring an immense price; but now, with a glowing face, he broke it unheatingly from the stalk, and without a sensation of regret, placed it in Nettie Blane's hand.

"Oh, thank you!" said Nettie's glad voice, "I will give it to her with your compliments."

And then the Big Gardener kissed every one of them as they passed out, and stood at his hot-house door, and watched the little procession as it wound out of sight with the Little Leader at the head, carrying the Basket of Flowers.

The Crippled Sister was lying on her low couch, working a butterfly on a white shroud—for the dead know not Christmas, and wait for no one's holiday; and as the emblem of immortality spread its wings beneath her glancing needle, she crooned over to herself the song that the angels sang to the wondering shepherds so many centuries ago; and as the "Good-will toward men" dropped from her lips, her chamber door opened, and the Light of the Household entered in, followed by the procession of children bearing their precious burden. The Light of the Household had tears in her eyes and a quiver about her mouth as she said, "Dear Sister, the little ones have brought you a Christmas present!" for she had met them at the hall-door, and divined all the sweet story from their few words of explanation.

Then the Little Leader stepped forward with the basket of flowers, and as the Crippled Sister took it in her hands the shroud fell aside, but even in the living delight of the Present, the butterfly of Immortality rested on her bosom below the shining flower of the Annunciation; and as the children stood round the bed in their poor clothes, and some of their hands hardened by toil, it dawned upon her how they had worked and sacrificed to bring her this token of love, and her heart was almost too full for words, and tears of purest, saddest joy dropped like rain upon the violets and heart's-ease that represented to her the tender gratitude of those innocent souls. "It is so beautiful! so beautiful!" she murmured, and they fairly thrilled to think she meant their happy gift; but Nettie Blane alone felt that it was of their feelings she spoke, and as if to crown the season's offering of good-will, she laid the single gorgeous blossom beside their own present, saying: "The Big Gardener sent you this, too, ma'am, with his compliments, because he said you 'must be a mighty good woman to make us love you so much.'"

Then the rich color flooded the Crippled Sister's cheek and brow, and her eyes shone, and she seemed to grow transfigured before their very sight into angelic youth and beauty, and her voice was almost like a song as she cried out: "O my darlings! you have made me so rich to-day, for you have brought me not only these lovely, lovely flowers, but something I thought never could come into my lonely life—the free, blessed Love of Children!" And she kissed them all over and over, and when they lingered as though loth to

leave her, her spirit seemed inspired to speak to them from the text of the flowers; through the Big Gardener's rare blossom she seemed to bring before them the wonders, the glories, the very atmosphere of the East; they saw the palms of India and the gardens of Damascus, the roses of Persia and the cedars of Lebanon; and out of the simple blooms of their own sweet gift she wove tender stories and lessons that would cling in their memories to heart's-ease and violets as long as they lived; and she told them at last that the great old artists, when they painted their pictures of the Angel bringing Good News to Mary, the Mother of Christ, always placed just such another white Lily in his hand; and that it was sign and token of message and promise. And somehow, as she talked, these poor, little, narrow lives felt themselves grow nearer to the angels; and when, after they had all joined together in singing for her the Christmas hymn, they went out to their humble homes with their hearts upraised in "Glory to God on high," because they felt, in their vague way, that in that one room at least there was "peace on earth and good-will toward men."

And the Light of the Household leaned over the Crippled Sister with a half sob in her tone as she said: "This is a happy Christmas, dear!"

"Ah, yes!" answered she. "And it all came from the precious Baby; for if it had not been for the Baby, I should never have thought of these other children! Kneel down, sister, and say a Christmas prayer for the dear Children and the darling Baby!"

VI.

BABY'S PARTY.

BABY was going into short frocks; and the Young Aunties had all assembled in Baby's home in order to assist the Young Mother in cutting down the long robes which had hitherto covered Baby's restless little feet. They were a gay and happy party as they sat around the pile of dainty white garments, one ripping, another cutting and the rest sewing with nimble and willing fingers, while Baby lay in the midst, and greatly interrupted the work and merry chat; for first one Young Auntie would stop to coo back to the chirping crows, and then a general flow of baby talk would suspend the flashing thimbles; then another Young Auntie, having to do a little necessary measuring of Baby's tiny person, must needs dandle the small creature awhile to each of the other Aunties, until the fun grew fast and furious, and Baby wild with infantile delight; and then another Auntie was moved to kiss the rosy mouth because "the little darling was too sweet to live," and all the other Young Aunties felt called upon to follow suit, until at last the Young Mother called the party to order, using her gold thimble as a gavel, and crying out in a loud voice that she had something important to say. Curiosity conquered the spirit of frolic, and the small fetich was left in peace by its feminine worshippers until all the say was said; the neglected cambric was resumed and the bright needles began to fly again in this charming sewing-circle.

"I have been thinking," spoke the Young Mother, when some stillness was restored, "that I should like to celebrate in some way or other

Baby's change into short clothes; suppose we have a Baby party!"

Then the sluices of talk opened up; exclamations of "Capital!" "Glorious!" "What a nice idea!" echoed from the Young Aunties, and then began to flow a stream of plans and suggestions.

"How many babies do we know?" "Shall all the rest come in short dresses like our Baby?" "Won't it be lovely to see such a lot of new baby shoes?" "All the Nurses will have to come, so it will be a Nurses' party, too!" "What will the Babies get to eat?" "Pap and arrow-root?" "Wouldn't it be rich to ladle boiled milk out of the big punch-bowl?" "What entertainment for the Nurses?" "Oh, unlimited tea and toast!" "Guess there'll have to be a supply of Mrs. Winslow's soothing syrup!" "Wonder if they'll all bring their rattles?" "Our Baby must have a coral to assist the concert!" "Ho! Baby! you're going to have a Ball! a grand Baby Ball! And all the fairy godmothers are coming, and all the Baby Princesses, with rings on their fingers and bells on their toes!"

Down came the authoritative gold thimble again to quiet the confusion of tongues.

"That is not the kind of party at all that I want to have," said the Young Mother. "Now, girls, do be still awhile till I tell you what my thought has been about it. We all know what a blessing our precious Baby is; how we all love her, and what a pleasure she is to us all—is she not?"

"Yes, indeed," rang out the Aunties, "she's just a dimpled angel, and worth her weight in gold!"

"Then," continued the Young Mother, speaking very softly and tenderly, "it seems to me so selfish to keep all the happiness of her to ourselves, when we might make her the source of sweetness and enjoyment to others. Now, you know, girls, that rich people's children get and have everything—our Baby couldn't do much for them; it isn't to the happy infants who have corals and rattles, arrow-root and pap in plenty, that I want to give my Baby's party, but for the poor little creatures that never have heard a rattle or saw a bowl of good boiled milk in their short lives. Oh, ever since my Baby was born there has come up to me so often the cry of the children—the children who are not sheltered and cared for as mine is; and I have wept over the mothers who must weep over their little ones, because they have so little to give them in a world that must be so hard to them! Can we do nothing for these? Can we not give these babies a party, and make it an occasion of kindness and rejoicing?"

The Young Aunties were silent now, and most of the bright eyes were moist with the dew of feeling; their impressionable hearts and fancies had gone out to those other babies so different in all their surroundings from their own family pet. But one of the gay young girls—partly because she did not like the unusual sensation of gravity which had settled upon her sunny spirits, and partly from a naturally practical as well as fastidious turn of mind—suddenly exclaimed: "But poor people's babies always smell so badly, and are so dreadfully dirty! they are so sour and slobbery, and generally wear yellow flannel petticoats!"

"Ah, dear!" answered the Young Mother, "how

can they be nice and sweet as our Baby, when the parents have to toil so hard, so early and so late, that there is hardly time to make the merest necessities of life? Besides, you must remember that there are some mothers so poor that they cannot afford even to buy soap!"

"O Sister, soap is so cheap!" cried the practical Young Auntie.

"Yes—to us. But to them bread is so dear; and bread is the necessity and soap the luxury."

The practical Young Auntie was practical no longer; to be too poor to procure soap was a depth of distress to which her imagination had never descended. She had an immediate vision of a rich Soap-boiler whose advances she had always scorned, but who loomed up now in her mind as a possible universal benefactor; and in a momentary fancy she was herself standing at the door of his factory, dispensing bars of soap to a dirty crowd, as nuns deal out food to the beggars at the gate of a convent, and somehow the Soap-boiler did not seem so low down in the social scale of humanity as before; he became instead a kind of apostle to redeem the Great Unwashed.

Her passing reverie was interrupted by the Young Mother's voice, as she continued: "Don't you think we could contrive at our party to provide these poor babies with some of the necessities that their mothers have so much trouble to obtain for them, and that, perhaps, will leave them a little of their hard-earned money for other things?"

"Soap, for instance," said the Young Auntie, who had scarcely got away from the Soap-boiler and his factory door.

The generous hearts of the Young Aunties were stirred, and the consultation was long and deep; and the girls went out of Baby's home with a thoughtful pucker in each smooth forehead, occasioned by profound consideration of each one's share in the new enterprise, and with much eager talk of the ways and means, and all they meant to do.

And lo! as the practical Young Auntie wended her way homeward, by a strange coincidence whom should she meet, face to face, but the Soap-boiler himself! and with a vague intention of securing future soap for scented babies, she absolutely allowed herself to return his respectful bow with a pleasant nod, whereupon the audacious Soap-boiler, who had hitherto secretly admired her afar off, took the liberty of joining her fair highness upon the open street. Once this man who thus dared would have been met with haughtiness and silence, and would soon have been made to feel that he was no fit escort for an aristocratic Young Auntie, albeit he had all the seeming of a presentable and courteous gentleman; but somehow, in the last hour soap had taken on a new dignity, and its manufacturer did not seem so near to the scum of the earth as before. So, involuntarily, she was almost gracious, and was surprised to find that the despised individual was well educated, had refined tastes, and even some beautiful enthusiasms; and in her astonishment and humility at having so under-estimated a human soul because of a worldly business, she actually invited the Soap-boiler to Baby's party. Afterwards she felt half ashamed of it, and laughed ironically to herself as she pictured him entering in the midst of assembled babies, dragging in a great box full

of brown soap. And at last it tormented her so that she had asked him, that she began to dream about him, and her nights were haunted by saponaceous visions until she almost began to envy those to whom soap was a luxury.

Soon the deft fingers of the Young Aunties began to fly in preparation; bundles of bright zephyrs adorned their tables; balls of worsted were forever being pounced upon by sportive kittens; odds and ends of yarn strewed each familiar place; every admirer was called upon to hold entangling skeins; and all their lighter talk was interspersed with grave counting of stitches, till it might have been thought that each one was weaving a Penelope's web, which was never to be finished. And they pursued the Grandfathers for coin to purchase Shetland wool, and tormented them perpetually for contributions to knitting-needles, till the Grandfathers—who, however, paid out on every demand, and were always rewarded by a kiss from rosy lips—grumbled after the fashion of men when their pockets are touched, growled greatly over the “nonsense of it all,” and declared that “babies were a nuisance anyhow!” and that “our Baby was too much spoiled!” at all of which the Young Aunties chafed and coaxed, and came off triumphant. But the hearty Grandmothers entered into the spirit of the thing with real goodwill, and gave excellent service in the cause. And the Poor Relation sent her small donation, neat, and pure, and simple as herself, and the Crippled Sister wrought night and day as she could at her share of the sweet work.

And so came on the day of Baby's party, a day when the sun was shining and warm hearts were glowing; when Baby's home was made bright with flowers, and in the midst thereof stood a great basket, heaped up to overflowing with all kinds of warm, and useful, and pretty baby garments. Baby herself was dressed in her first short frock, much to her own intense delight, as she could thus uninterruptedly play with her disclosed feet, for the first time covered with the wee-est pair of colored slippers, which her round eyes contemplated with curious observation, and her chubby fingers began immediately to try and pull off. Never yet had she beheld anything so fascinating; and to kick the small phenomena back and forth, and crow with self-approbation, seemed to have become her crowning satisfaction.

The first to arrive were the Grandfathers and Grandmothers, the latter each carrying a bundle of last contributions, and the former, half-laughing and half-grumbling, protesting that the whole thing was an absurdity; that there were enough paupers in the world, without encouraging poor folks to bring any more into existence; that women, anyhow, always had more sentimentality than common sense; that because there was one Baby in the family, there was no reason to go mad over a whole lot of other babies! But the wary Young Mother held her little one up for them to kiss, and that stopped their further speech, for they immediately began to amuse and entice the infant with the gold heads of their canes, and straightway became as foolish over Baby as any woman belonging to them.

Then came in the Young Aunties, one or two at a time, in the prettiest of simple toilets, and with the sweetest of youthful, happy faces all aglow with the excitement of benevolence, and all eagerness

and exclamations over Baby's loveliness in its new attire; and with one Young Auntie entered the undaunted Soap-boiler, who had waylaid her on the road under the pretense that he felt rather shy at going alone to a party where he knew so few—much to her dismay, as she had over and over again repented the momentary enthusiasm of humanity which caused her to give the invitation, and had hoped that he had forgotten it; but somehow, as she crossed the threshold with him, blushing with an unsubdued caste pride or shame, she could not help but watch very narrowly the reception accorded him, and her light heart was greatly relieved to see that he was warmly greeted by the Grandfathers, who, being sensible men of the world, thought a good deal more of a man's character than his business; that he was cordially welcomed by the Young Father and Mother, whose sense of hospitality did not permit them to exhibit any surprise, or any other feeling than pleasure, at his presence; and above all, that the other Young Aunties sufficiently concealed their amazement and scorn under the mask of distant courtesy; but because she did perceive, notwithstanding, that in their innermost hearts they were looking down on her escort, her own rose up in involuntary championship, and made her so gracious and respectful to him that he enthroned her Queen of his Life forever.

Then the pure presence of the Poor Relation entered like a blessing in their midst, and there was a softness and tenderness in every one's manner as she moved from one to another in salutation, which showed that angels are not always entertained unaware.

And at last, hearty and cheery, with her big black coal-scuttle bonnet tied under her double chin, and in one hand the inevitable cotton umbrella—stout in the stick and faded in the stuff—while the other grasped the bulging basket whose lid was tightly secured with green ribbons, in rolled the Fat Nurse, who, still panting and blowing, having been settled on a wide seat with Baby trotting away on one knee, proceeded dexterously to open with a single hand that mysterious basket without which she was never known to appear, and about whose contents there had always been more or less curiosity; and behold, when the lid was uplifted, there was the capacious interior filled to the brim with carefully-packed sucking-bottles, while the mellow voice poured out an explanation: “You see, when this 'ere precious Baby sent me an invite to come to the party—cos, perhaps, I might help some of the poor mothers with my experience—thinks I to myself, now I'd like to do something for them poor little mites as don't get much nussin', nor any too much vittles or comfort; but I have them belongin' to me as I have to take care of, and so have mighty little money to indulge my feelings with, and I lay awake two or three nights off and on a-cogitatin' and ruminatin' how I should make it out, and at last I just set out mornin' after mornin' with that basket of mine, and went to every house where I had nussed, and asked the ladies to give me all the bottles they had done with for poor women as couldn't buy 'em; but I didn't get enough, as babies keep comin' on in most families, and bottles, like the long clothes, are apt to descend to the next; so I went around every place where I could find a lot of bottles that could be made to

do, and fixed 'em up with tops as don't cost much, you know, and there they are, and welcome!"

The Young Aunties told her that she was "a real, dear, good old soul!" and the Grandmothers patted her on the shoulder and praised her good sense, while to the glistening sight of the Poor Relation these plain bottles sparkled like diamonds; but the Young Mother, thanking her warmly, brought the moisture to the small, twinkling eyes half-buried in the fat cheeks, by stooping over and tenderly kissing the coarse, good-humored mouth, for though the Fat Nurse was homely, common and ungrammatical, though she wore a frilled cap and a bombazine coal-scuttle, and carried a faded, cotton umbrella, and though her "profession" was not the most exalted walk in life, still this Young Mother saw under all this the kind and generous heart, and only felt that "by their fruits ye shall know them!" And lo! at last, when they were thus gathered together, and waiting for the babies, the primmest of footmen, in the trimmest of livery, delivered with careful precision a very large package and a very short note, and all the assembled group were quite struck dumb to think that it had never entered any of their minds to ask Aunt Hannah; for the unexpected missive simply said:

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The Young Aunties immediately thought of that grim fairy of the story-books who is always left out at the christening, and comes in at the last moment, furious at the slight, to counteract all the good gifts of the other fairy godmothers. But though their Aunt Hannah seemed a very grim fairy indeed to the Young Aunties, there was nothing malicious in her gift; for, when the package was opened, there lay a score of violet and dove-colored merino Babies' cloaks, warm and wadded, suitable and plain; and as they all stood in a group looking at these there came a fresh tenderness into the face of one of the Grandfathers.

"We let Hannah too much alone," he softly said, at length. "Poor thing! she never forgets;" and then noticing the curious looks on the Young Aunties' countenances, he added: "Ah! girls, Aunt Hannah is homely and old now, but she was once as young, and pretty, and happy as any of you. My sister had a great sorrow long ago, and these little things tell me that she has never forgotten. We must all go and see her more. Her life must be lonely enough in her big, empty house. Go and see her, girls—go and see your Aunt Hannah!"

And as he turned away there were tears standing in the eyes that had just looked into the past.

And hardly had the cloaks been laid out of sight when mothers and babies commenced to arrive. It was a pathetic sight to see them all collected together. All were scrupulously clean, in spite of the Young Auntie's foreboding, and some of the infantile faces fairly shone as if they had been well rubbed into unusual whiteness; and though there were indeed a few yellow flannel petticoats, these obnoxious garments had at least no shadow of dirt on them, while the poor dresses of the mothers were mended, and washed, and made as decent as possible, for it was a very rare

holiday, and all seemed to have striven to be in everything becoming. The babies themselves were many of them scrawny, and pale, and miserable to behold, but not particularly noisy, for the silent patience of endurance enters early into the spirits of the very poor, and their occasional cries of want and pain were more of feeble whines than the healthy roar of indulged infancy. It stirred the hearts of the women to notice how lean and bony some of the tiny arms were, and how pinched and old a few of the little faces; but still some were round, and rosy, and lusty—evidences of Nature's success in spite of circumstances, and with sound lungs, which, however, they were much too interested in the novel scene to use.

There was thin and tired-looking Mary Maloney, who took in washing, and whose equally lean baby had never known any other cradle than a broken wash-tub, and who, when no kindly neighbor took care of her child during her absence, carried her washes home on one arm, and her baby on the other. And there was a consumptive seamstress, whose weird and unnaturally quiet infant looked like a little shriveled-up old monkey, with preternaturally keen and cunning eyes; and big, bouncing Kitty Flanagan, with a heart as ample as her broad bosom, on which reposed too sickly twins, the legacy of a dead daughter, and which tremendous charge the generous soul had accepted with a resignation which was almost cheerfulness, though she had to work almost day and night to keep the life in them, and some besides who were dependent upon her. And there were many others gathered in from the byways and hedges of life, and to whom need and sorrow were all too familiar, and pleasure a luxury they had scarcely ever known; so that in all these hard lives, so worn, so weary with toil and care, so unlovely and unbrightened, this sweet occasion of Baby's party became the Day of Days. After the bustle of reception was over, and all were comfortably seated around the parlor, the Young Mother moved a small table in the midst, on which was laid the large, new Family Bible, which had been one of her wedding presents, and on the blank leaves of which between the Testaments the only records were her own marriage and that of Baby's birth. She read, half-shyly and with tender grace, the beautiful story of the Star of Bethlehem; and when she paused, some of these poor mothers, who perhaps had never heard a line of the Good Book before, felt as if a new sacredness had fallen on their own babies, since a little child had once been worshiped by the Wise Men of the East. Then she turned the cherished pages a little farther on, and again read only three verses, the three most beautiful verses that ever touched the universal heart of humanity; and it seemed to all those untutored natures, who through all the burden of maternity had felt the throb of love, that this blessed voice which eighteen hundred years before, had rebuked the disciples, still spoke to each one of them, and bade them "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," and because "of such is the kingdom of Heaven," there fell the holiness of possible angelhood upon each unseemly waif, and for a space there was a reverend silence as if the hands of Christ were in reality being laid upon the little ones, and even the babies themselves kept wonderfully quiet. Then one of the

of brown soap. And at last it tormented her so that she had asked him, that she began to dream about him, and her nights were haunted by saponaceous visions until she almost began to envy those to whom soap was a luxury.

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And as he turned away there were tears standing in the eyes that had just looked into the past.

And hardly had the cloaks been laid out of sight when mothers and babies commenced to arrive. It was a pathetic sight to see them all collected together. All were scrupulously clean, in spite of the Young Auntie's foreboding, and some of the infantile faces fairly shone as if they had been well rubbed into unusual whiteness; and though there were indeed a few yellow flannel petticoats, these obnoxious garments had at least no shadow of dirt on them, while the poor dresses of the mothers were mended, and washed, and made as decent as possible, for it was a very rare

holiday, and all seemed to have striven to be in everything becoming. The babies themselves were many of them scrawny, and pale, and miserable to behold, but not particularly noisy, for the silent patience of endurance enters early into the spirits of the very poor, and their occasional cries of want and pain were more of feeble whines than the healthy roar of indulged infancy. It stirred the hearts of the women to notice how lean and bony some of the tiny arms were, and how pinched and old a few of the little faces; but still some were round, and rosy, and lusty—evidences of Nature's success in spite of circumstances, and with sound lungs, which, however, they were much too interested in the novel scene to use.

There was thin and tired-looking Mary Maloney, who took in washing, and whose equally lean baby had never known any other cradle than a broken wash-tub, and who, when no kindly neighbor took care of her child during her absence, carried her washes home on one arm, and her baby on the other. And there was a consumptive seamstress, whose weird and unnaturally quiet infant looked like a little shriveled-up old monkey, with preternaturally keen and cunning eyes; and big, bouncing Kitty Flanagan, with a heart as ample as her broad bosom, on which reposed too sickly twins, the legacy of a dead daughter, and which tremendous charge the generous soul had accepted with a resignation which was almost cheerfulness, though she had to work almost day and night to keep the life in them, and some besides who were dependent upon her. And there were many others gathered in from the byways and hedges of life, and to whom need and sorrow were all too familiar, and pleasure a luxury they had scarcely ever known; so that in all these hard lives, so worn, so weary with toil and care, so unlovely and unbrightened, this sweet occasion of Baby's party became the Day of Days. After the bustle of reception was over, and all were comfortably seated around the parlor, the Young Mother moved a small table in the midst, on which was laid the large, new Family Bible, which had been one of her wedding presents, and on the blank leaves of which between the Testaments the only records were her own marriage and that of Baby's birth. She read, half-shyly and with tender grace, the beautiful story of the Star of Bethlehem; and when she paused, some of these poor mothers, who perhaps had never even heard a line of the Good Book before, felt as if a new sacredness had fallen on their own babies, since a little child had once been worshiped by the Wise Men of the East. Then she turned the cherished pages a little farther on, and again read only three verses, the three most beautiful verses that ever touched the universal heart of humanity; and it seemed to all those untutored natures, who through all the burden of maternity had felt the throb of love, that this blessed voice which eighteen hundred years before, had rebuked the disciples, still spoke to each one of them, and bade them "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," and because "of such is the kingdom of Heaven," there fell the holiness of possible angelhood upon each unseemly waif, and for a space there was a reverend silence as if the hands of Christ were in reality being laid upon the little ones, and even the babies themselves kept wonderfully quiet. Then one of the

Young Aunties rose up and went to the piano, and sang this sweet benediction of children:

"To Thee, O God! whose face
Their angels still behold,
We bring these children, that Thy grace
May keep, Thine arms enfold.

"And as the blessing falls
Upon each youthful brow,
Thy Holy Spirit grant, O Lord!
To keep them pure as now."

And the hearts of the mothers were so full that tears fell down on the wan faces of the babies; and then all the Young Aunties gathered together around the instrument, and chanted, in their clear, fresh tones, "The Mother's Hymn," that our honored Bryant wrote out of his poet's wisdom and insight; and the unfamiliar light and glow upon their mothers' countenances, made them so strange to their babies, that they raised up their voices also and wept aloud. Then the doors were thrown open, and in was borne, not only one punch-bowl of boiled milk, but another, borrowed from the Grandmothers, brimming over with arrow-root pap; and there was great frolic and fun among the busy Young Aunties filling up the Fat Nurse's acceptable bottles, and soon a gentle, gurgling sound proclaimed that the whole assembly were ecstatically at peace; while the Fat Nurse sat in the midst, beaming all over with delight at the appropriateness and usefulness of her present, and dealing out advice here and there, after the decided fashion of one having authority.

"You needn't tell me, Mrs. Maloney, that if that child of yours had such feedin' every day it would ever get plump and healthy! It ain't vittles it wants so much as air! Yes, air! Don't I know well enough how you folks shut yourselves up in your room, and patch up every crack and cranny to keep out a draught? Ain't you afraid as death of a shiver, and keep every window down for fear of a bit of chilliness? You think close air is warm air. Now, if you'd put any sort of a cover over your baby, and then fling up your sashes, and let in the blessed breezes till the smell and the mustiness were all cleared out, and there was a chance to breathe something that you couldn't cut with a knife, your child would gain a little flesh and color, and you, too, for that matter! You're just killing your baby with foul air; that's all that ails it; and it's a good deal better to be a trifle cold than to be dyin' by inches! Well, I know, my dear soul, that coal is dear, and every one can't afford a fire; but a little of the Lord's good, fresh air to sweeten your home won't freeze you to death!"

And then she unhesitatingly accused another conscious mother of giving her baby paregoric to make it sleep at night, or while she was at work, as it was easy to be seen that the small creature was one of the restless, nervous sort who are always teething and always crying. No denial or excuse could deceive that practiced eye; but instead of a severe and indignant protest, she imparted a piece of information: "Don't you know what a sugar-tag is? You just take a cracker and pound it up—crackers don't cost as much as paregoric, and one will do two or three times—and sweeten it a little, and tie it up tight in a bit of rag; stick it into your baby's mouth, and it will

suck away at it, and keep still for hours; try that, and throw your paregoric bottle away anyhow; for cryin' is natural, but stupor ain't."

And while she delivered her oracular injunctions, the Young Aunties were amused to notice that the Soap-boiler, sitting quietly near by, listened to her quite attentively, as though he thought the Fat Nurse was a character; who knew what she was about, and was well worth hearing; and she, nothing daunted by her unusual audience, gave these ignorant mothers, in a few moments, more instruction on the proper physical rearing of their children, than perhaps they had ever learned in all their lives before.

Soon after, when the Babies were all inwardly refreshed, and many of them asleep, all the cushions and pillows in the house were brought into requisition, and all the sofas and arm-chairs were filled, and the Fat Nurse, Baby's own Nurse, the two Grandmothers and the Poor Relation were left to mind them all, while the mothers were ushered into the dining-room, where a plentiful repast had been prepared. The Young Mother had brought out all her prettiest china and finest glass, and her table was set and garnished as though her guests were the best of her friends; and the Grandfathers sat at either end and carved for the hungry eaters till their faces glowed with the exercise; and the Young Father and Mother, the Young Aunties and the Soap-boiler waited on them, and the latter acquitted himself so gracefully, was so thoughtful and considerate, and so gentle and courteous to each poor woman as though she had been the highest lady in the land, that one Young Auntie in particular, watching him critically, began to think him the noblest and truest gentleman she ever saw, and remembered the old story of Gareth, who served in the palace kitchen for a year and a day before he proved himself one of the gallantest knights of King Arthur's Round Table.

After they had returned to the parlor, and each mother was gathering up her own offspring, the Young Mother noticed the Grandfathers standing together and looking on. Directly they said a few words to each other, and then suddenly disappeared; and amid the greater freedom of chatter which had begun, she heard their gold-headed canes striking the hall-floor, and the front door closing behind them. For half an instant she was mortified, but then reflected that there must be something more than weariness and disgust behind their departure, and she felt confident that in a little while they would be back again, as they had not spoken to her before going out.

Then the Young Aunties struck up a gay song with a well-known chorus, in which most joined, and then another and another, and when the laughter and noise became a little more than decorous, the great basket was borne in all heaped up with gifts. Everything that mothers could desire for their babies was there. Warm things, soft things, woolen things, fleecy things, knit things and woven things, and even a rattle apiece for every baby present; and the Young Mother and Young Aunties had great joy in the delivery, first placing each article in Baby's tiny hands, to be given by her to each other baby, so that everything should be considered as Baby's own gift to the little ones.

The pleasure and gratitude of the mothers was

pathetic to observe. Some were loud in their thanks, but some could hardly speak at all; and one of these, dumb with too much feeling, sank upon her knees and kissed the Young Mother's bountiful hands. But the climax was reached when Aunt Hannah's cloaks were brought forward and dealt out. Hardly, in their wildest dreams had these poor women hoped to ever have anything for their infants so dainty and comfortable; and when they were told that these had been sent to them by a lonely old lady who had no children of her own, the mother-soul vented themselves in all manner of quaint and tender blessings and good wishes for her whose generous heart had thus, amid her solitude, remembered the children of the poor.

Then every baby was invested with its new garments, submitting to the operation with unusual serenity, as if they, too, were charmed with their acceptable possessions; and in truth, the appearance of many was so improved by these pretty and bright additions to their scant attire, that the mothers were quite elated with pride, and grew eloquent in their praise of each fresh article.

And when the bustle of admiration had a little subsided, Kitty Flanagan, with the twins pressed to her ample bosom, decked in their new array and each enveloped in one of Aunt Hannah's cloaks, arose, and begged to be allowed to make a few remarks; and when a surprised silence was thus secured, she said, right out of her full heart: "Shure, and it's not meself that often shpakes out before my bethers; but it would be too mane to thim that has thrated us so splindidly if there was niver a one to say a word for the rist; and troth, I am just shure that I exprise the sintiment of ivery mother presient when I wish that all the saints may guard the awate Baby as gave this party; and may the blissing of the Lord God Almighty and the love of the Virgin Mary be upon this house and all thim that's in it!" and she extended the twins, one on each arm, and waved them as if in benediction, and sat down with a very red face, while all the mothers cried, "Amen!"

There was a little awkward pause of emotion; the mouth of the Young Mother quivered; the Young Aunties' eyes were very moist, and those of the Poor Relation shone as with a light; the Grandmothers coughed, and the Soap-boiler turned suddenly and looked out of the window, while the Young Father shook as much of Kitty Flanagan's hand as could be released from her hold of the twins.

And lo! when the time came for departure, there on either side of the parlor door stood a bareheaded Grandfather, each with a roll of crisp bank-notes in his hand; and as every woman passed out one of these was put in her hand with a "God bless you!" or "Good luck to you!" by these sly old Grandfathers alternately—who had slipped away to the bank together, at the time the Young Mother was so sorry to see them leave the house, in order to secure this pile of bright, clean bills, and be back again to bestow them thus at the moment of departure; and when the last mother and baby had disappeared through the door, the Young Mother and all the Young Aunties fell upon them, and kissed them over and over for being such "precious, rood old darlings!"

And everybody said that Baby's party had been a grand success, and there was that sweet glow of happiness in the heart of each that came to them inasmuch as they had done it to the least of these, His little ones; and the Poor Relation remembered that when Simon Peter answered to Jesus, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," He said unto him, "Feed my lambs."

After this the audacious Soap-boiler became more and more attentive to one particular Young Auntie, who slowly and reluctantly, but involuntarily, yielded to his advances, much to the astonishment and amusement of the other Young Aunties, who watched the affair with much satirical interest, and chaffed her unmercifully, after the fashion of thoughtless girls who did not care to see anything serious behind the mirth of a good joke. One day she would find a cake of fancy soap upon her toilet-table, with the compliments of the Soap-boiler directed in the unmistakable handwriting of a mischievous Young Auntie; another time she would find her own soap spirited away from its dish, and the address of the factory left in its place; and sometimes small bouquets ingeniously cut out of variegated soap would be surreptitiously arranged around her room; and the very name of soap began to be such a torture to this perplexed Young Auntie that she blushed at its very mention; until one day the Fat Nurse came in to say that there had just been left at her house, for distribution among the poor mothers who were at Baby's party, a dozen barrels of crackers and as many more of sugar, "to help keep the babies quiet," and an accompanying envelope full of orders for coal, so that "the same babies might be kept warm enough to get some pure air;" and in the midst of the wondering who the generous donor could be, this Young Auntie recollecting how attentively the Soap-boiler had listened to the Fat Nurse's instructions to the mothers on the day of Baby's party, felt, with a great rush of tenderness, that it could have been only he who had done this good thing, and her heart went out to him to be his forever and forever. So that, when she came into her room a day or two after, and saw a caricature prominently placed over her mantelpiece, representing her admirer with a leather apron tied around his waist, and a big stick in his hand stirring a steaming kettle of soft-soap, and was aware of the peeping faces of the assembled Young Aunties watching through the crack of the door the effect of their latest attempt at ridicule, she indignantly tore down the picture, rent it into shreds and stamped on them, and then flinging wide the door, cried out in her anger and anguish, "That it was a mean shame to vilify a noble gentleman; that they knew as well as she did that, though he owned the factory, he did no such work there; that he had inherited his business from his father, and whatever they might think of it, had made it by his honorable dealing the peer of any other; that he was a good man and true, and that—that—they might say what they pleased about it, but she loved him—oh, she loved him!"

There was no more chaff after that. The Young Aunties were all conscience-smitten immediately; they rushed into the room; they put their arms around her, and caressed her and cried over her; said they were only in fun, and begged her to forgive them; and praised the Soap-boiler with an

affectionate hypocrisy that brought her soul content; though they were very much surprised to find that the Grandfathers were mightily pleased with the match, on account of the good name and great uprightness of the suitor's character.

And on the day of the wedding, in fidelity to the apostleship of cleanliness and appreciation of

soap, a large box of the same was left at the home of each poor mother, who, at first, perhaps did not connect this unexpected and remarkable gift with the gay Young Auntie who had helped to make them all so happy on that memorable day of Baby's Party.

MRS. SARAH B. STEBBINS.

(To be continued.)

The Home Circle.

FROM MY CORNER.

No. 52.

THE summer is over at last. How thankfully I write the words each time that season passes now; for what good does the heat of summer bring me, these later years, that outweighs the pain? Yes, the summer is over at last, with its heat, its long, weary days, and its usual accompaniment of sickness. Again the death-angel hovered over our home, brooding so close for a time that its nearness cast a gloom, almost as if its presence were really within. But the powers of life were victorious in the end, and slowly, back through tedious convalescence, came the dear one. Now we can thankfully gather together once more about our usual occupations.

But all are worn somewhat in body and mind, and glad to take some change and diversion in various ways. I have come once more to the dear little country home which I have so often visited for rest and cheer. The mother-face, so young and yet so motherly; the mother-heart, so warm and tender that it can hold a large place for me, besides its own treasures; the counsel and companionship derived from such true friendship, all strengthened me.

And the daughter, still so sweet and fair, so full of playful brightness one hour and womanly seriousness the next, makes a light in the house and in my heart with her presence. She takes me about to show me whatever new thing she has added to her treasures of room ornamentation since I was here before. One that I noticed and liked particularly was a cornucopia made of a cow's horn, scraped very smooth and painted black. The open end was bound with gilt paper, a narrow ribbon or bright cord tied to each end to suspend it from a nail on the wall, and the side that hung outward covered with small embossed pictures of various designs and bright colors. It was really a handsome article. Then in the centre of each of the lavender-colored window-shades was tacked a spreading bunch of ferns, large and small, which made a lovely little picture. I have seen these before on walls and white muslin curtains for bed-rooms, and they look very pretty for some time.

Right here, while mentioning ferns, I must tell of something beautiful and much appreciated that came to me before the summer faded. Tearing open an envelope from Mr. Arthur one day, I found inside a letter bearing a *foreign postmark*. New Zealand! How strange! A place clear out of our world, rarely heard of in this quiet little corner. Opening it eagerly, I feasted my eyes on the loveliest ferns I ever saw. Spray after spray

of various kinds, and little bunches of feathery green moss, as delicate as could be; and two large leaves of the lemon verbena, or citronella—sweetest of all leaves to me. What a message they brought away over the far south seas, and across the mountains and plains—a message of thoughtful kindness, which will always live in my heart. Some of these ferns have been added to my keepsake wreath, where they will be pleasant reminders, as well as adding greatly to its beauty.

Lying here, near Floy's window, on this soft, autumnal afternoon, the sunset glory having just died from out the sky, I look out upon one of the most beautiful pictures of nature. The trees below the garden and meadow completely hide the town lying at the foot of the hill, and afar over their tops I first catch glimpses of the river flowing sleepily along, then of its green banks on the other side, merging into the forest of cotton-wood. Beyond it the ground rises gradually, and fields and broad stretches of prairie land seem, at this distance, to lie on a level with the tree-tops. Then comes a range of hills, and lastly the grand old mountains, dim and shadowy in the soft, hazy atmosphere, seeming almost to lose themselves in the sky. Above them, in the almost colorless ether, banks of fleecy clouds, white, or softly tinted with gray, hang low and motionless, so calm and still is the air.

I gaze until my senses are filled with beauty, and my soul strangely stirred, sometimes with a feeling of half-sadness, sometimes a deep, quiet rapture. Now the thought comes over me—I know not what suggested it—that the fading of this beautiful day is like the fading and dying of a beautiful, useful life. The sunshine that has brightened the lives of others, the sweet and pleasant graces that have been like balmy airs, the hours filled with deeds of use and kindness—all are gone, and now the closing scene is being enacted. It makes me think of Keble's beautiful lines:

"Ever the richest, tenderest glow
Sits 'round the autumnal sun;
But then sight fails—no heart may know
The bliss when life is done."

Last night, after it grew too dark to write, I still watched the earth and sky until the last gleams of daylight faded into darkness. Then soon through the trees a glorious moon looked down full upon us, filling the night with soft radiance, throwing shadows of the leaves on the ground, on the eave-ment and on the little portico without, where vines clambered over the lattice and swayed in the light breeze.

I wonder why it is that to some minds there is always something melancholy in watching the moonlight. It has been so with me ever since I was grown. It is always subduing, and of later years brings memories, and a wistful, longing feeling, different from that of any other time.

As the evening wore on, a cousin of Floy's came in; the guitar was brought out, and we sang some of the sweet old songs—"The moon on the leaf," "Midnight Hour," and "The dew is on the blossom;" ending with some old hymns—"Sweet hour of prayer," and "Nearer, my God, to Thee." Dear associations these last hold for me. One we used to sing at the twilight hour, gathered together in the porch; the other was taught me by the dear brown-eyed woman a few years ago when she visited us, and I sang it often after that for one who, worn with age and care, slowly passed away to the other world. Many a night, after hours of weary pain, she would have me sing it before she could go to sleep, and it soothed her more than anything else. To me it seems the sweetest hymn ever written or sung. How many hearts have been lifted, soothed, comforted and encouraged by its words.

"Out of my stony griefs, altars I'd raise,
So through my woes, to be nearer, my God, to Thee."

Yes, it is oftenest our woes that bring us nearest. When all is bright and fair, and our lives glide smoothly on a summer sea, then we too often think we can easily get along by ourselves, and are forgetful of the sustaining Hand; but let trouble come, and the heart be sick with woe, and we fly to the Rock, ready to cling there until we can feel

"All that Thou sendest me, in mercy given."

So let us cling ever, sure of safety nowhere else, whether cloud or sunshine surround us.

LICHEN.

MOTHER.

MOTHER! What a world of tenderness there is in the simple word! What hosts of recollections are clinging about it! The first dear word our baby lips framed; the one word that fell as music all through our childhood; the rich soprano of the home melody, linking all the other chords together.

Dear, loving mother! The little child clings trustingly to the helping hand, and falls to sweetest slumbers in the protecting arms. The boy, treading out and on to the farther bounds of childhood's enchanted land, tosses aside books and ball whenever a shadow dims his sky, and goes to mother for comfort. She can dispel the clouds; she can brighten every pleasure a thousand fold; she holds the magic key that unlocks all of life's most secret springs. The man, grown weary with all his striving with the world, all his battling with wrong, all his hopes, and fears, and aspirations, comes back to mother—comes with the old trust, as in other years, to lay his fevered head, safe and sheltered, in those dear arms, and be comforted as only mother can comfort. The woman—"my girl," mother always says, be she young or old, maiden or wife—comes to fall into many of the old-fashioned thoughts and ways for mother's sake. And when overburdened, sad and heart-sick, when all adrift, shadowed over and shut in

by clouds of doubt and fear, whose hand can soothe and smooth life's ills away but mother's? Whose eye can see beyond the clouds? Whose voice can sing to our souls, that above it all God's blessed sunlight is always burning with steady radiance? Who but mother?

Precious name! Speak it gently, aye, reverently—mother! She has suffered much, loved and waited long, ever hopeful, prayerful; "our household angel." Pray God that time's silver be sparingly sprinkled among the tresses we love so well. Pray God always and ever to bless and keep mother. **MRS. CHARLOTTE E. FISHER.**

HOME TOPICS.

WE do not have the best facilities for bathing here at the "Nest," but we manage to make a good use of such means as lie within our reach. In the girls' rooms up-stairs we have mats, made by cutting a circle of oil-cloth about three feet in diameter, and sewing the edge over a large rope or hoop, to make a rim. One can stand on this without fear of wetting or splashing the carpet. This, with a pair of mittens made out of coarse, Turkish toweling, and a small towel of the same is all that is necessary. The mittens are better than a sponge, for all one has to do is to dip the hands into the water and rub quickly over the body, taking care to wet the head first.

One's bath should not always be the same. We find an occasional bath with salt and water to have the effect of a tonic. At other times, a spoonful of ammonia is good, put into a pailful of tepid water, especially for those who perspire freely; at other times a fine, warm, Castile soap-suds; and frequently, clear, cold water. The latter when one experiences a sense of lassitude, weariness or a desire to sleep at untimely hours.

Every girl honestly desires to be attractive. While every woman cannot be beautiful, she can be absolutely charming. She can be intelligent, and that is one of the most potent charms; she can be cheerful, and that is a charm above all price; and she can have pretty, kindly ways that will make everybody love her. She can be so gracious that her presence is as sunshine and dew, and her coming will be hailed as a source of pleasure. Perseverance will accomplish results the most gratifying. To those wishing to be beautiful, we say, good health is the key to beauty. The healthy woman can snap her fingers in the face of the world. Health is more to be desired than wealth, for it brings to its possessor a joy that even the most exquisite beauty is powerless to bestow. Every woman ought to have an intelligent knowledge of hygiene and physiology. Then she would not dare to wear tight clothing, knowing the fearful consequences; to overload her stomach with improper food, or to expose herself to inclement weather; to go with insufficient clothing, or to risk her health improperly during contagion. A knowledge of the commonest facts in hygiene would prevent all this. She would learn that in this busy, bustling, working life we all live, nothing is so necessary as rest—rest that comes in time to prevent chronic diseases and ruined constitutions.

A fine, clear skin is not possible without pure blood, and this can only be insured by strict atten-

tion to diet. One must learn to deny herself tea and coffee, pork, pastry and many articles of food that she likes; must learn to eat slowly and at regular hours; must be cheerful and hopeful, ready to laugh, and sing, and enjoy the simple pleasures of life. To keep this good blood pure, requires plenty of exercise in the open air. "The skin must be kept clean," a voice says from over our shoulder, "and I see you have forgotten one of the best things yet, and you must not forget to tell the girls that soda-saleratus is invaluable in real warm water for bathing purposes. Put enough in the water to make it feel a little slippery or sudsy; it is very sweet and cleansing, but should be rinsed off the face, neck and hands well, for fear of sunburn." "Yes, I see," says the woman's voice beside us, "you have left out none of the requisites, you have spoken of food, exercise, bathing, fresh air and sunshine. They are the cosmetics that nature keeps in her laboratory to deal out to the girls, and they should never stoop to use any substitutes. The paltry subterfuges of art should be scorned by every pure-minded girl."

We would never make war on freckles. They make a plain face piquant and roguish. Only yesterday, one of the professors, in speaking of a young lady visitor, said: "Her freckles are her charm, they match her brown eyes and her sunny smiles, and give her face such a rare, roguish expression." They can be coaxed away with sour buttermilk-wash, lemon-juice, vinegar and bruised tansy, but the first ride out in the sunshine will bring them all back again, browner than at first. They are "the stolen kisses of the sun."

To prevent sunburn, one should not wash immediately before going out. Let the entire and thorough ablution be at night, this will in a measure save the complexion when necessarily exposed.

To make the hair soft and abundant brush it often and wash the roots of it with a small brush dipped in warm water with a trifle of any cleansing fluid in it, say borax, which is very sweet, and clean, and cooling.

The teeth should be washed and brushed daily, the mouth rinsed after each meal. Care should be taken not to use a harsh brush, or one that would injure the gums.

Take care of the figure. Bring out all the good points possible, and if there be any defects, the latitude of fashion will allow them to be hidden by some contrivance which will enhance and beautify. Make your clothing to fit your body, not your body to fit your clothes. Wear shoes that are comfortable, and easy, and neat, even though they are larger than any other girl of your acquaintance wears. Who cares! What can measure with your own comfort? Tight shoes are a source of discomfort, and the origin of corns, tender joints, bunions, ingrowing toe-nails, and worst of all, defective vision. Many a girl wears glasses, and rumor says "injured her eyesight by hard study," when the truth is, that her shoes were two sizes too small. We have an understanding with our shoe dealer, and when one of the girls authorizes us to select her shoes, we invariably get the size that best fits her foot. The jolly dealer knows what number to mark them, and is it any wonder that Celia says no one can select good, comfortable, easy shoes to suit her half so well as Aunt Chatty.

When a young lady wears glasses, and says she injured her sight studying while at the seminary, one may doubt the assertion—there is room for a doubt. We do not assert this maliciously nor in a spirit of unkindness, but on the word of two good old physicians, grown gray in long years of successful practice.

When we wrote, "make the garment to fit the body," there came directly up before us the job of work on which Esther's busy fingers were flying. It may not be out of place to mention it just here, lest we forget it altogether. A lady came one day lately with a silk dress to be made over into something newer. She was tired of the way it was made, with skirt and polonaise trimmed with lace. The fit of the polonaise was excellent, and Esther's quick eye saw a solution instantly. The lady wished to have a shirred and flounced skirt, elaborately trimmed and a basque quite plain. Because the polonaise fit so well, the length of the basque was measured and cut off, and the lower part of the polonaise made the princess skirt. The box-pleating around the skirt remained the same as before. The front was trimmed with lace and headed with passementerie or beaded jet, trimmed to simulate a double front. The back part was draped. The basque was trimmed with satin cord and a simulated fichu of lace headed with jet trimming. This last suggestion was Esther's. The basque did not come high enough about the neck, and the woman was thin and spare about the shoulders, so the fichu trimming hid the pieced places, and gave the thin shoulders the appearance of plumpness. What a pity all dress-makers have not the eye of the artist and the skillful tact to make beauty, and harmony, and good taste come at their bidding. Cut-glass buttons were used to match the sparkle of the bead trimming. The dress was made walking length. The price for making over will not exceed four dollars, because the basque was ready made, no ripping required and no change in the sleeves and cuffs.

Aunt Chatty herself has something new, too, and just to help those girls who are obliged to study economy, we will tell you about it. A pretty dolman is nice and dressy, isn't it? We thought so last spring when the girls from the lake came to our public society one evening, but we never thought of getting one, till one day our old-fashioned sister-in-law, Levi's wife, asked us if we hadn't something to exchange for her black silk shawl. She said it had been lying in her trunk for years, and she was afraid it would mildew. We had no use for it, but we always think black silk is as good as a bank check, so we told her we would give her our cashmere dress. When the shawl came we laid it away until one day one of the girls suggested that such elegant silk would make a beautiful dolman if Chatty was not too kind to cut it to pieces. Chatty wasn't. The shawl was large and cut to good advantage. We had it trimmed with that pretty, modern fringe, silk and chenille, headed with beaded passementerie. It is made to fasten in front and bows of gros grain ribbon set on, to each of which is attached a bit of the fringe to simulate a tassel. To take away the plainness of the back a trimming of lace, headed with jet, extends down the two curved seams, and a zigzag fall of lace reaches quite to the bottom. A standing collar completes the garment. It is really pretty, and we often loan it to the girls to

wear. Indeed, sometimes we are half-inclined to think that when the girls urged us to cut the beautiful silk shawl they were slyly adjusting their own claims, and maturing plans that we did not suspect. However, it is all right, and we love the darlings all the same for their cunning, roguish tricks. Who could withstand their winsome ways, we wonder?

But our thoughts have ran away from the starting point, and the quiet "home topics" lie away back in the serious mood with which we commenced writing. We wanted to tell the girls right fairly our mind on one subject that some of them need to hear of—"the fellows," "the beaux." We meant to scold them soundly before we rounded up this last message of ours in 1880. But this afternoon the Woman's Missionary Society meets in Millwood, and the secretary—ourselves—has all her minutes and reports to put into good reading order by two o'clock. So good-bye, girls—let us all come again, God willing—but, if we meet not again in this circle, so full of friendly, and cordial good-will, and good cheer, can we not take to our hearts the restful promise, that,

"Far out of sight while yet the flesh enfolds us,
Lies the fair country where our hearts abide,
And of its bliss is naught more wondrous told us,
Than these few words, *I shall be satisfied.*"

CHATTY BROOKS.

GOSSIP.

MY DEAR GIRLS: Some one has written that "gossip keeps the heart warm." It seems to me, rather, that it kindles a fire in the heart which consumes the warmth of human love, and leaves instead thereof only the bitterness of gall and the defilement of pitch, which either embitter or tarnish everything they touch.

The habit of gossip may begin in thoughtlessness, in the desire to say something interesting; and, alas, what is so generally found entertaining, or so eagerly listened to, as reports of what this or that person has done or said; so what is more natural, to one who thinks only of self, than to bring themselves into notice by such means; at first, perhaps, there is no intention of telling what is untrue, or of doing harm, but the story, of course, must be made effective, and, if possible, startling. This is done, consciously or unconsciously, by suppressing some things and adding others, by making the shadows deep and strong. The capacity for story-telling develops rapidly, truth and falsehood become so involved in the narrator's mind, that it is difficult to distinguish them, and at last it is impossible.

Self-exaltation seems to be one of the strongest incitements to the indulgence of this vice; the idea seems to prevail that finding and displaying black spots on the fair fame of others, shows the purity and spotlessness of the critic. Shall we never, never learn that the way to make ourselves appear clean is not by throwing mud at some one else?

There can be no possible computation of the extinction of family trust and affection, of the friendships dissolved and love-ties broken, of the sorrow caused and the lives embittered, and even ruined (in a worldly sense), by this most unholy practice.

Avoid, my dear girls, all the avenues leading to

the possibility of your becoming such servers of iniquity; if you find yourselves speaking of others unkindly, uncharitably, fault-findingly, stop at once. Do not allow yourselves to get into the habit of watching others critically; in the silence only of your own hearts, endeavor to put a charitable construction on their acts and doings.

We cannot judge of a book by a fragmentary word here and there; no more can we judge a life by an occasional act, of which we can see neither the beginning nor the ending, of which we have no idea of the motives nor the connecting links; we cannot read their thoughts, and perhaps, were we in their places, should not do as well as they have done. At all events, we have no right to judge them. When we know how impossible it is for us always to do right, no matter how hard we try, it should teach us charity for and sympathy with others.

Life is hard enough for us all if we try to fill it as much as possible with the love that is always faithful, that thinketh no evil, that is long-suffering, and yet is always kind. It is our duty to love one another. Have we not had the highest teaching to that effect? And how dare we, who fall so far short in our efforts to follow the one perfect example, and who have so much to be forgiven us—how dare we judge others?

"Oh, pity one another, my children! Pity, I implore you, each other's weakness, pity each other's sorrows, but most of all pity each other's sin. For, could ye but see aright, the sin, and the sorrow, and the weakness are one. Hold no bitterness in your hearts one against another. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Forgive as ye would be forgiven. Speak only of others as you are willing that others should speak of you. Love one another; show your discipleship by your power of loving.

AUNTIE.

MODESTY.—The virtue or grace of maidenliness in girls is one that the present age does not very highly esteem. It is a more successful thing to be "jolly" than to be gentle and modest, and a girl who would "get on" finds it necessary to distinguish herself by wearing rumpled hair, or a flame-colored ulster great-coat, or departing in some other way from the graces of her sex. Where life is crowded and rapid in its movements, notoriety is almost as necessary to ambitious young women as to proprietors of patent medicines. Thus it is not strange that maidenliness should be hustled out of existence. It is a virtue which is not in harmony with the modern "environment." It must disappear, like the duty of revenge and the practice of tattooing.

THERE is much ridicule thrown upon castles in the air; but there never was one on earth that was not once the imagination of some fertile brain, nor was there ever an intelligent piece of labor of any kind that did not form the centre of a group of airy existences in the mind of the performer.

It is useless to endeavor to make a child control his temper if you give way to your own, to tell him to be truthful while you are not strictly so, to inculcate neatness while careless of your own dress. The little folk are keen observers, and will not respect you unless you are worthy. Be careful not to impose unnecessary restrictions—to forbid nothing without reason.

Evenings with the Poets.

ANNA.

CLOSE now her azure eyes
With gentle fingers;
See what a happy smile
On her lip lingers.
From the soft, dimpled cheek,
Once blushing brightly,
Lift every golden lock
Tenderly, lightly.

Over the snowy breast,
Pulseless forever,
Clasp the fair little hands
Lightly together.
Leave her thus—thus asleep—
Life's fever over;
Never shall pain again
Trouble or move her.

All the long, lonely night,
Moaning and tossing,
How was her spirit grieved,
Death's river crossing.
But Christ was on the waves,
Tenderly calling,
And His strong arm of love
Kept her from falling.

Yield we our idol up
At the grave's portal—
We in our love forgot
That she was mortal.
But the sad angel, Death,
Loved our fair blossom,
And the dear little form
Pressed to his bosom.

Let us not mourn that these
Love ties must sever;
Though we shall see her face
On earth never,
May we soon go to her,
Blest and forgiven—
May her frail little hand
Lead us to Heaven!

M. LOUISA CHITWOOD.

THAT CALF.

AN old farmer, one morn, hurried out to his
barn,
Where the cattle were standing, and said,
While they trembled with fright: "Now which
of you, last night,
Shut the barn door, while I was in bed?"
Each one of them all shook his head.

Now the little Spot, she was down in the lot,
And the way the rest did was a shame;
For not one, night before, saw her close up the
door,
But they said that she did, all the same;
For they always made her bear the blame.

Said the horse, Dapple Gray, "I was not up this
way
Last night, as I now recollect;"
And the bull, passing by, tossed his horns,
And said, "Where's the one to object, very
high,
If I say, 'tis *that calf*, I suspect?"

"It is too wicked now," said the old brindle cow,
"To accuse honest folks of such tricks;"
Said the cock in the tree, "I am sure 'twasn't
me;"
All the sheep just said, "Bah!"—there were
six—
And they thought now *that calf's* in a fix!

"Of course we all knew 'twas the wrong thing to
do,"
Cried the chickens; "Of course," mewed the cat.
"I suppose," said the mule, "some folks think
me a fool,
But I'm not quite so simple as that—
Well, *that calf* never knows what she's at."

Just then the poor calf, who was always the laugh
And the jest of the yard, came in sight.
"Did you shut my barn-door?" said the farmer
once more;
And she answered, "I did, sir, last night,
For I thought that to close it was right."

Now each beast shook his head. "She'll catch it,"
they said;
"Serve her right, for her meddlesome way."
Cried the farmer, "Come here, little bossy, my dear,
You have done what I cannot repay,
And your fortune is made from to-day.

"Very strangely, last night, I forgot the door
quite,
And if you had not closed it so neat,
All the colts had slipped in, and gone straight to
the bin,
And got what they ought not to eat;
They'd have foundered themselves upon wheat."

Then each beast of them all began loudly to bawl;
The mule tried to smile, the cock crew.
"Little Spotty, my dear, you're the favorite here,"
They all cried. "We're so glad it was you!"
But *that calf* only answered them, "Boo!"

PHOEBE CARY.

VIOLETS IN NOVEMBER.

SWEET souls! for her they lingered,
Though sere the meadow lies;
They are a-kin, the darlings,
To violets in her eyes.

Life, too, hath its November,
Its gray and chilly skies;
Oh, when to her it cometh
May violets surprise!

FANNY FALES.

Young Ladies' Department.

HOW TO STUDY A LANGUAGE.

THAT is, if you are not at school, or if you have not a private teacher. In either of these cases, you have a method laid out for you. But, if you are obliged to depend altogether upon your own exertions, in the matter of study, you will most likely hit upon a plan of your own. And, in endeavoring to do so, the following suggestions may be of some benefit to you.

If you have a good knowledge of English grammar, half the battle is won. If you have not, you may find it profitable to procure a copy of Hart's elementary grammar, and learn, at least the large print, thoroughly. You need not, however, spend so much time upon it as is usually spent in the schools—it will be sufficient to gain a general idea of the technicalities of language, referring to the authority, Gould Brown's Grammar of English Grammars, when in doubt. This book you will find in any public library.

Assuring yourself that you "know your grammar," avoid troubling yourself with the rules of the new tongue. Skip preliminaries, and attack it boldly. The grammars of modern languages are so much alike that it is a mere waste of time to attempt learning another when you already know one—the differences are so few and so striking that they can readily be detected, and it is they only that need to be impressed. (At least, this is true so far as I know).

Don't attempt, at first, to read or translate the finest work in any particular literature. Take something with which you are already familiar, so that, in case of doubt, you can refer to an English version. For instance, the New Testament. There are many advantages in beginning your studies with this work, among which may be mentioned: First, In nearly all modern languages, it holds the highest rank as a classic. Second, You are well acquainted with its contents, and can readily compare it with your own Testament. Third, Its indirect advantages in improving your taste and mode of expression. Fourth, Its cheapness.

Arm yourself, then, with a New Testament in the desired language and a dictionary. In some languages (perhaps many), the nouns and verbs differ from those of English, in their modes of termination. If you have taken up Latin, you can procure a little book containing a table of these terminations, for twenty-five cents. If French, you will most likely find them in the front of your dictionary. As to other languages, perhaps some friend can give you the needed information upon this point. If you really think you must have a grammar, get one, by all means—but I would advise you to consult it very sparingly, at this stage. One word as to books—don't be above buying them at a second-hand store, if need be.

Open your foreign Testament at the second chapter of Matthew, and begin at once to translate. Yes, translate—even if you don't know the language. Write out every word in the first verse in English—surely, you can use your dictionary, your table of terminations, your own sense, and, as a

last resort, your English Testament, and find out how nearly right you are. Proceed in this way, no matter how slowly at first. From a few verses you can easily go on to one chapter, and then several, at last being able to dispense with pen and ink, with the dictionary, and finally with the English translation altogether.

The result indicated, however, will not come all at once. You will find many a cause for doubt, many an occasion for discouragement. Still, you will often be surprised to discover how much you have actually accomplished.

Having finished translating the Testament, begin at the beginning again and read it through. If I mistake not, you will find little more difficulty in doing so than in reading English. Perhaps it took you six months to translate; probably it will take you only one month to read. Now, though far from having a thorough knowledge of the chosen tongue, you have a grasp upon it which will soon enable you to use it profitably.

Next, take a simple poem or story with which you are tolerably familiar by translations. Read it slowly and carefully, writing out the more difficult passages, hunting up, of course, any word that you do not know. Gradually accustom yourself to work away from the idea that you really are using a foreign language—that is, learn to take in the sense so well that you are scarcely conscious that you receive it through any medium at all. In other words, break yourself of the habit of translating in your mind, but actually *think* in French (or Spanish, Italian, etc., as the case may be).

Shall I repeat that this cannot be done all at once? Keep on reading, however. From the easier poems and stories, pass on to the difficult and the classical. Paradoxical as it may sound, the harder the way becomes the easier you will find it. All good libraries contain most of the works that you want.

Why do you wish to learn a language? To read its literature? Then, if you are determined to work hard, and if you love your pursuit, you can accomplish this end without a teacher. But if you want to speak and pronounce correctly—if you want the thorough knowledge that will enable you to pass a trying examination—then you do need instruction. But, unless you have plenty of time and money, there is no use in your spending very much of either, until you can read and understand by yourself; then you may profitably take a few lessons by way of finishing, so as to perfect yourself, as nearly as possible, in pronunciation and in the little idioms which you cannot learn from books. Pronunciation, however, can scarce be thoroughly learned unless you are thrown among people who actually use the language.

By this, or a similar method—in fact, by cutting loose from traditions and depending on yourself—you can learn a tongue in a time of the time usually given to it. And, for your further encouragement, let me add, that when you know one language you know half of another, and you will soon discover how to continue your studies better than any one could tell you.

MARGARET B. HARVEY.

Health Department.

HOW NOT TO TAKE COLD.

DR. BEVERLY ROBINSON, in a lecture on "Colds and their Consequences," gave the following good, practical suggestions:

If you start to walk home from a down-town office, and carry your coat on your arm because the walking makes you feel warm, you are liable to take cold. Therefore, don't do it. If you should take the same walk after eating a hearty dinner, your full stomach would be a protection to you, but even then my advice would be, Don't take the risk. A person properly clothed may walk in a strong wind for a long time without taking cold, but if he sits in a room where there is a slight draught, he may take a severe cold in a very few minutes. Therefore, don't sit in a room where there is a draught.

Unless you are affected by peculiar nervous conditions, you should take a cold sponge bath in the morning, and not wash yourself in warm water. Plunge baths in cold water are not recommended; neither is it necessary to apply the sponge bath all over the body. Occasional Turkish baths are good, but those who have not taken them should be advised by a physician before trying them. Warm mufflers worn about the neck do not protect you against taking cold, but, on the contrary render you extremely liable to take cold as soon as you take them off. They make the throat tender.

Ladies ought to wear warmer flannel under-

clothing than they now do, if one may judge from the articles one sees hanging in the show-windows of the shops. People take cold from inhaling cold air through their mouth oftener, perhaps, than by any other way. Ladies dress themselves up in heavy furs, go riding in their carriages, and when they get home, wonder where they got that cold. It was by talking in the cold, open air, and thus exposing the mucous membranes of the throat. The best protection under such circumstances is to keep the mouth shut. If people must keep their mouths open in a chilly atmosphere, they ought to wear a filter.

Above all, be careful of your feet in cold, damp weather. Have thick soles on your shoes, and if caught out in a rain which lasts so long as to wet through your shoes despite the thick soles, put on dry stockings as soon as you get home. But in cold, wet, slushy weather, don't be caught out without overshoes. Rubbers are unhealthy, unless care is taken to remove them as soon as you get under shelter. They arrest all evaporation through the pores of the leather. Cork soles are a good invention.

When you go into the house or your office, after being out in the cold, don't go at once and stick yourself by the register, but take off your coat, walk up and down the room a little, and get warm gradually. Warming yourself up over a register just before going out in the cold is one of the worst things you can do.

The Temperance Cause.

BEER.

IT is claimed by brewers throughout the United States that beer (by which is generally meant lager beer) is really a friend of temperance, if not actually conducive thereto. The different brewers' journals refer boastfully to the reports of the brewers of malt liquors, which yearly show an enormous increase, as evidence of the fact claimed. It is boldly asserted that whisky, brandy and other "hard stuffs," alone produce drunkenness as seen at the present day, and make drunkards, and fill drunkards' graves. That malt liquors, being weaker and less potent in their effects, appeal more powerfully to the "popular" taste, lessen to a great extent the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits, and that, consequently, the gentlemanly and respectable manufacturers of the former are entitled to a place among the reformers of mankind, but little, if any, lower than Murphy or Gough.

Manifestly, a more insidious doctrine was never sought to be inculcated among men. The proposition is entirely false, is calculated to deceive and hoodwink those prone to a moderate indulgence in the inebriating cup, and to nullify and prostrate the efforts of total abstinence advocates.

Statistics need not be repeated to show that drunkenness, or, more properly, the drinking of intoxicating liquors, is greatly on the increase, despite the efforts of temperance reformers. The United States International Revenue Office alone affords abundant evidence of this deplorable fact, in the greatly augmenting receipts from the manufacturers of both spirituous and malt liquors.

A discussion of the best methods of temperance reform has no place here. Let us direct our attention to beer. It is a mild beverage. We are told it contains but two or three per cent. of alcohol; and, also, that the average man can imbibe one and one-half ounces of absolute alcohol before the "poison-line" is reached. It is conceded that no one ever became a drunkard, or becomes addicted to the use of intoxicants, in a day. No young man, or old man, ever began his imbibitions with the "three or four fingers" of gin or brandy, or a "whisky straight." He is obliged to commence on a light drink, and to take it quite in homeopathic doses at first, until his system becomes accustomed somewhat to the inevitably fatal poison. We might readily conceive how that in former days hundreds, perhaps thousands, were deterred from the commencement of the pernicious practice, because there were only strong drinks

(ale is termed "strong beer") with which to initiate the tempted individual; but in these "modern" times lager beer fully meets the demand for a weak beverage for the novice. It is made pleasant to the taste by the use of (to all but brewers) unknown drugs, and attractive to the eye by its sparkle and foam. A young man, under the pressure of seeming friendship, is easily lured into attempting a glass. It slightly exhilarates him, and his blood may, perchance, course through his veins with increased vigor, his eye become unusually bright, his conversation more brilliant; and cheered on by his friends(?), who applaud his departure from the "milk-and-water" policy, he may indulge a little further. He may experience no ill effects from this first "taste," and is quite ready to again experiment with the dangerous mixture, and increase his potations. After a time he finds himself able to drink equally with his fellows, imagines it benefits his system in arousing a false appetite for food and inducing sound slumber, until his "beer" becomes quite as essential as his dinner, and is no more to be omitted than his breakfast coffee.

But does it stop here? Does beer continue to "fill the bill?" Nay! This course of moderate drinking will doubtless continue a long time, but lager for only a comparatively short while suffices. Sooner or later, and with unerring certainty, the appetite for a stronger stimulant is formed; and when the victim finds his beer a *sine qua non*; when he is fairly in the toils of the insidious foe—the arch enemy, who, particularly in this respect, presents the temptation in its most pleasing form—then he is on the high road to drunkenness, then the fatal pit of the drunkard is open, even at his

feet, and his fall is imminent. But he does not pause. He heeds not the warnings of experience, disregards wise counsels of true friends, pursues his course, and ends—where? Go ask the thousands of widows and orphans who have felt the power of this fearful curse! The poverty and wretchedness of humanity everywhere bear witness to the terrible results. The destruction of many happy homes attest the consequences of the once moderate indulgence. For, arriving at the stage we left him, the miserable victim seems quite powerless to stop. Then ardent spirits alone can satisfy the cravings of his unnatural appetite; beer is only "slops" to him; and the deeper and more frequent his potations, the better his insatiable thirst is gratified. But only for the time being. There is now no cessation in the downward course. Manhood, self-esteem, self-respect, all are lost, and only the merciful interposition of an Omnipotent God can save him from inevitable ruin.

It is unnecessary to pursue this inquiry further. The beginning and the end are here portrayed, and none will say it is an extreme case. Observation and experience show it is the usual course—the sure means to the certain end. Beer caused it. Beer is a *mild* beverage. Beer contributes to temperance and sobriety(!) Beer conduces to health and long life(!) Beer advances the temporal and spiritual welfare of humanity(!) Beer manufacturers are friends of the temperance cause(!!!) Brewers endow colleges, build seminaries and other institutions of learning. Brewers are eminently respectable and worthy citizens(?).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, they have their reward."
G. G. S.

Housekeepers' Department.

RECIPES.

RICE CAKES.—A pint of flour, two eggs well beaten, a cup of cold, boiled rice, a teaspoonful of salt, and sufficient milk to make a rather thick batter; all well beaten together and cooked on a griddle.

SPIRALS.—Two eggs beaten quite light, with sufficient flour stirred in to make the mixture very stiff; add a pinch of salt and stir again, then roll out quite thin, cut strips about two inches wide and four long, and roll round the finger as if curling hair. Fry in butter a delicate golden shade, and sprinkle powdered sugar just before serving.

SAVORY OMELETTES.—Break three eggs into a flat dish, or large plate; add a little cream, chopped parsley, pepper and salt, according to taste. Beat them well together with a knife. Have ready a brisk, clear fire; put two ounces of butter into the omelette-pan; get it to a boil, then add in the mixture, and keep it well stirred and shaken. When set, tilt the pan so as to fold the omelette; then turn it out on a hot dish, and shape it lightly with the fingers.

PLAIN BREAD-AND-BUTTER PUDDING.—Cut the bread-and-butter in rather thick slices, lay them in a dish, strew a few currants over them, then an

other layer of bread and currants, and so on until the dish be filled. Beat two eggs, with one pint of hot milk, and add a little allspice and nutmeg, sweeten to taste, pour over the bread in dish. Be careful to let it soak for half an hour before baking. Bake for half an hour.

TO MAKE RICE-CAKES.—To one pound of ground rice, add half pound of sifted sugar, a teaspoonful of baking-powder, mix well with half pound of butter, beat up four eggs and make into a wet paste, drop into buttered pat-pans, and bake in a quick oven.

USEFUL HINTS.

IVORY-BACKED BRUSHES, TO CLEAN.—These may be cleaned in a few minutes, without spoiling the ivory or softening the bristles, by rubbing dry bran into them, and shaking them well to free them from the grain.

SHETLAND SHAWLS, TO WASH.—A good method for washing Shetland shawls, a Scotch recipe. The water should be rather more than lukewarm, and white soap should be boiled and mixed up in the water before the shawl is put into it. It must be washed in two waters, and rinsed in rather

warmer water, to clear it entirely of the soap, otherwise it will get thick and hard. To a pint and a half of warm water put two teaspoonfuls of dissolved gum arabic, mix the water and gum well together, dip in the shawl and squeeze it two or three times, so that it should take equally all over, then wring it well out of this water, and wring it again in clean linen cloths. Pin it out square on a carpet, with a clean sheet or tablecloth under it, till thoroughly dry.

INK MARKS OR IRON MOULDS may be removed by placing a plate (a pewter one if possible) on the

top of a basinful of boiling water; then stretch the spot over the plate; wet it, and rub it with a small quantity of salts of lemon. When the stain has disappeared rinse the article in clean cold water.

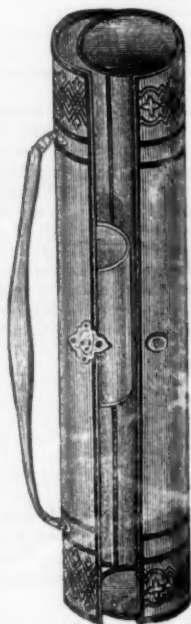
GREASE-SPOTS—HOW TO REMOVE.—Grease from composite candles may be removed from any woolen cloth by stretching the spot greased over a very hot iron or before a brisk fire for ten or twelve minutes, taking care not to scorch the cloth, then rubbing the place whilst warm with a piece of the same material, and brushing it briskly the right way of the wool.

Fancy Needlework.



TIDY.

TIDY IN CROSS-STITCH AND OPEN-WORK—Ground of white Holbein lawn, trimmed round with white pillow-lace embroidered with blue thread. The ground is a square of about thirty inches wide, and is divided into stripes. For the close stripes blue twilled linen about six inches wide is sewn on to the lawn, after it has been embroidered with white thread in chain, knotted, herring-bone and plain stitch. On each side of these stripes is a fourfold strand of blue and another of white thread, sewn on with overcast stitches of the alternate color in reversed position. The other stripes have an open-worked design with a centre pattern in cross-stitch. For the open-work leave twelve threads on each side of the blue stripes, then three times alternately draw out six and leave three. Then draw out six and leave seven, which will join the outer edge of the cross-stitch stripe. Then work on the threads left



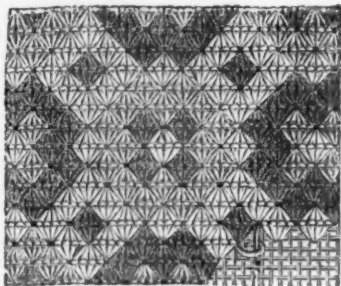
MUSIC FOLIO.

in the open-work pattern a herring-boning of light and dark blue threads. Every four of the threads left are then crossed with dark blue. The cross-stitch border work with three shades of blue thread. The ground is then turned down in a narrow hem, and stitched with blue.

MUSIC FOLIO—EMBROIDERY.—Folio of cardboard, covered with gray canvas cloth and bound with strips of dull red leather. Similar bands of leather are used on the canvas. The canvas cloth is embroidered in chain-stitch with two shades of Venetian-red crewels. The handle, of canvas, is bound and lined with red leather. Inside, the folio is lined with white moirée paper, and it is fastened by means of a spring clasp of bronze.

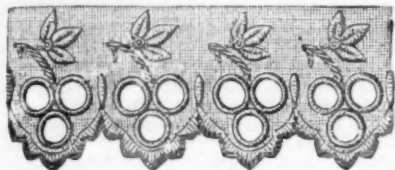
PATTERN FOR SLIPPERS.—This pattern consists of rows of raised spots. Each stitch is taken vertically over four threads of the ground; there

are four stitches in each spot, all of which are worked in the same hole of the canvas, and crossed in the centre with a horizontal stitch, which must



PATTERN FOR SLIPPERS.

take in the canvas also. The next row of spots is worked in a contrasting color, so that endless varieties of patterns can be devised by skillful arrangements of color.



BORDER FOR LINGERIE.

BORDER FOR LINGERIE—WHITE EMBROIDERY.—This border is worked on batiste or linen in satin, tent and button-hole stitch, with fine white embroidery cotton.



CRAVATTE.

CRAVATTE, OF FOULARD.—This cravatte is cut out of a straight piece of striped foulard, forty-eight inches long by seven wide. It is hemmed along the lengthway of the material, and finished off at the ends with a pleating of cream-colored insertion, a band of striped foulard three inches wide, and a frill of cream-colored lace, also three inches wide.

Art at Home.

HARMONY OF COLORS.

WE often hear the expression a good eye for color, and it is this that you must have if you wish to become skillful in house decoration. A good eye for color is described by one who has written much about it as "an eye sensitive to the minutest influence of one color on another. Some people are by nature sensitive—instinctively they go right, but all may become so by education and observation." The appreciation of special colors depends much on our peculiar constitutions. To some yellow or reds are most agreeable; to others, blue or greens. We feel great delight in some combinations of color; others are indifferent or disagreeable to us. Ruskin tells us, and with truth, that at quiet, happy times we can best appreciate color. But we believe that the study of a few of the first principles of color is a help when we feel that we cannot trust to "our good eye," and that we may so educate that eye by observing the wonderful harmonies of nature in our woods and fields that at last it will learn to appreciate and choose.

You all know that there are three primary colors—yellow, red and blue—by the mixture of which all other colors are produced. From yellow and red, we have orange; from yellow and blue,

green; from red and blue, purple; which are called the complementals of the primary colors. These again produce a third series. Orange and green give olive; orange and purple, brown; green and purple, gray. In a harmonious arrangement, just as in a picture, all the primary colors should be present in some degree, or there will be a sense of incompleteness. A complementary color is so called because it fills up or completes the primary scale. Orange is the complementary of blue, purple of yellow, green of red; or, in other words, if yellow is the prevailing color, red and blue—that is purple—complements or fills up the scale; if red is the color, yellow and blue, that is green, is the complementary; if blue is the color, orange, composed of red and yellow, completes the scale. If you want a powerful contrast, you must remember that a complementary color placed near a primary color increases its intensity; at least it appears so to us. There is no change in the blue or orange, but such is the effect on us. But strong contrasts are not the only things needed; a harmonious blending of color is even more pleasant to the eye; and in the third series of colors—the olives, browns and grays—we shall find backgrounds for bright colors which are always satisfactory.

Have you seen daffodils growing in a very green

priately so, as the "Baby-Plant." It is of the genus lily, sometimes attaining the height of four feet, and blossoming semi-annually. The one of which we write is, however, not more than twelve inches in height, with leaves about six inches long and two inches wide. The flower is star-shaped, having five petals of handsome brown and yellow color. The calyx encircles and protects a tiny little figure that bears an exact resemblance to a nude baby, its little arms and legs outstretched and the eyes distinctly marked. Hovering over

the diminutive form is a small canopy, angel-shaped, having extended arms and wings, and peering closely into the face of the infant. The family of plants of which the "baby" is a member produce not only the specimen on exhibition, but also give perfect imitation, if such they can be designated, of different animals, insects and birds. Mrs. Mark Hopkins, of San Francisco, has one of the later varieties, for which three hundred dollars was paid.

Publishers' Department.

HOME MAGAZINE FOR 1881.

AS stated in the last number, we are arranging for new attractions, and perfecting our plans for making the HOME MAGAZINE still more acceptable than it has ever been. No previous volume has given such general satisfaction, or received such warm commendations, as the one we are now closing. By referring to our advertisement for 1881, in this number, some of the many "good words" which have come to us from subscribers will be found. They are no half-way utterances, but clear, hearty and spontaneous.

For next year the HOME MAGAZINE will be as much better than it has ever been as it is possible for us to make it. There will be no material change in its character; only, as far as it can be achieved, a higher degree of excellence and a more perfect adaptation of every Department to the needs and interests of American homes. Most of the old and more favorite writers will be retained, while new literary talent will be secured in order still further to enrich its pages.

A still more careful supervision of manuscripts will be given by the editors, as in one or two exceptional instances articles have been passed into the magazine which, on the score of good taste, if for no other reason, have not been acceptable to some of our readers.

Mr. Arthur will commence a new serial in January, and later in the year we are promised one from the pen of Virginia F. Townsend, if her health, which has not been very good, should warrant her in undertaking the work. In a recent letter, she says: "I am not yet strong enough to dare to undertake one to commence in January, and cannot even give my word to begin a serial in July; but I am glad to tell you that my health has in some respects improved, and I hope to return to my work one of these days."

Our readers, with whom Miss Townsend has always been a favorite, will join us in the earnest hope that she may continue to improve in health, and that they may soon see her familiar name, and give her a hearty welcome in the opening chapters of one of her pure and charming stories.

"No You Don't."

IN this spirited picture an artist records one of the amusing episodes that sometimes give variety to a sketching tour. A country lassie has, at his solicitation, or in a merry freak, posed for him to draw her figure; but, ere his work is half finished, runs off laughing.

COMPOUND OXYGEN AS A PROTECTION FROM DISEASE.

The following, which is taken from a letter received from an old patient, dated June 5th, 1880, shows the effect of Compound Oxygen in keeping up vitality under circumstances of great fatigue, loss of rest, exposure to a fever, changed atmosphere and all the depressing influences attendant on the sickness and death of near and dear relatives.

"It (the Oxygen), has certainly been a blessing to me since I first tested its virtues. My father" (the late Judge —), "who was not at all inclined to like new remedies, often remarked that he believed in the Oxygen without understanding it, because he saw the good it did me.

"I have always thought it might have saved my father if he could have tried it at the beginning of his illness, but he contracted the fever when off on his circuit, and was dangerously ill when he reached home. I think, however, that the use of the Compound Oxygen saved me from contracting the fever.

"For ten weeks my sister and I nursed him constantly, day and night, she losing one-half and I the other of each night. I took the Oxygen regularly twice a day, and though feeble and much exhausted did not have any symptoms of the fever; while my sister, who did not use the Oxygen at all, took the fever and died. She, too, was very delicate, but I do not believe she would have had the fever if she had been using the Oxygen. We used every precautionary measure in the way of cleanliness, pure air, wholesome food, etc."

A Treatise on Compound Oxygen, which contains a history of the discovery of this new curative agent, and a record of a large number of remarkable cures is sent free. Address, Dr. A. Starkey & Palen, 1109 and 1111 Girard St., Phila., Pa.

CHILDREN CRY for PITCHER'S CASTORIA, because it is sweet and stops their stomachache. Mothers like CASTORIA because it gives HEALTH TO THE CHILD and REST TO THEMSELVES, and Physicians use CASTORIA because it contains no morphine or other narcotic property.